NATION

SC partly stalls CBI probe into WB job scam

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

After tariff mayhem, mkt rises by 1,089 pts

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Marsh, Pooran shine with bat as LSG beat KKR by 4 runs

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 9 APRIL 2025 | WEDNESDAY | BENGALURU | 10 SHAWWAL, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 95 | Pages: 8

Waqf Act comes into force, SC to hear pleas next week

Flames billow out after a vehicle was set on fire during a protest over the Waqf (Amendment) Act, in Murshidabad district of West Bengal, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Supreme Court would likely on April 15 hear a batch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 which comes into effect on Tuesday. The Centre, however, on Tuesday filed a caveat in the apex court and sought a hearing before any order was passed in the matter.

Over 10 petitions, including those by politicians and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, were filed in the top court challenging the validity of the newly-enacted law.

> **We can't burden 21st-century generations with the politics of the 20th century. The protests around Waqf are rooted in the politics of appeasement**
> —Narendra Modi, PM

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Congress MPs Imran Pratapgarhi and Mohammad Jawed, AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, RJD MPs Manoj Jha and Faiyaz Ahmad, AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan have also filed similar petitions in the apex court.

The DMK through its deputy general secretary A Raja said in a press release, "Despite widespread opposition, the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2025 was passed by the union government without proper consideration of the objections raised by the members of the JPC and the other stakeholders."

In a press statement, SQR Ilyas, the AIMPLB spokesperson, said the petition strongly objected to the amendments passed by Parliament for being "arbitrary, discriminatory and based on exclusion. It not only violated the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution of India but also clearly revealed the government's intention to take complete control over the administration of Waqf, therefore, sidelining the Muslim minority from managing their own religious endowments."

Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution ensure freedom of conscience, the right to practice, propagate religion, and the right to establish and manage institutions for religious and charitable purposes, it said. —*PTI*

In a 1st, SC sets timeline for TN Guv to pass bills

DMK breathes easy as SC says Guv 'sitting on bills' is illegal

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

> **This is a crucial step in restoring balance in Union–State relations and a landmark victory in Tamil Nadu's continuous struggle to usher in a truly federal India**
> —MK Stalin, Tamil Nadu CM

In a major victory to DMK-led Tamil Nadu government, Supreme Court on Tuesday cleared 10 bills, which were stalled and reserved by Governor RN Ravi for President's consideration while setting a timeline for governors to act on the bills passed by state assemblies.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan held, "Action of the Governor to reserve the 10 bills for President is illegal and arbitrary"

In the first, the court fixed a timeline within which Governor has to act on bills passed by the state Legislature.

The bench said in case of withholding assent on a bill and reserving it for President with the aid and advice of the council of ministers, the maximum period would be one month.

In case the Governor decided to withhold assent without the aid and advice of the council of ministers, the bills must be returned to the assembly within three months, it added.

The top court said in case of presentation of a bill after reconsideration by the state Assembly, the bills have to be given assent by the Governor within a period of one month.

The bench cautioned any failure to comply with the timeline would make the inaction of Governor subject to judicial review by the courts.

The bench said Governor couldn't sit over bills and adopt the concept of "absolute veto" or "pocket veto". "Pocket veto" denotes a concept where Governor sits over the bills without signing it and virtually making it ineffective. The bench said Governor sitting over bills passed by the assembly and presented to him, without any action, made them just a "piece of paper" and "skeleton without flesh". —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

GOVERNOR CEASES TO BE CHANCELLOR OF STATE-RUN VARSITIES

CHENNAI, 8 APRIL

In the wake of the Supreme Court judgment over the 10 bills of the Tamil Nadu Assembly, DMK leader P Wilson on Tuesday said that Governor RN Ravi ceases to be the chancellor of state-run universities as per the court verdict.

Government sources indicated initiation of process soon to notify in the gazette, the bills that have been cleared.

In the wake of the judgment, when reporters asked if the Chief Minister MK Stalin will be the chancellor of state-run varsities or if the government will appoint chancellors, senior advocate and DMK Rajya Sabha MP, P Wilson said the 10 bills were for removal of the governor from varsities where he held the office of the chancellor. —*PTI*

HIGH TEMP IN 27 CITIES

A child sips a soft drink while riding a swing during a hot summer afternoon in New Delhi on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Heatwave scorches India as summer begins

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

A searing heatwave swept through many states of central and western India on Tuesday, with temperatures soaring to a scorching 46.4 degrees Celsius in Rajasthan's Barmer.

According to IMD, a total of 27 stations recorded temperatures equal to or above 43 degrees Celsius in the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. At least 19 of them recorded heatwave to severe heatwave conditions.

Parts of Delhi, including the Safdarjung Observatory (41) -- the primary weather station of the national capital -- and Ayanagar (40.4) also recorded heatwave conditions.

Barmer in Rajasthan was the hottest place in the country, recording 46.4 degrees Celsius, 7.6 degrees above normal, the IMD said.

In Gujarat, Surendranagar recorded 44.8 degrees, Rajkot 44 degrees, Amreli 43.8 degrees, and Mahuva and Kandla 43.4 degrees Celsius. Mahuva saw a sharp rise of 8.3 degrees above normal.

In Maharashtra, Akola recorded 44.1 degrees, Nandurbar 43.5, Jalgaon 43.3 and Amravati 43 degrees. Guna and Ratlam in Madhya Pradesh reported 43.4 and 43.2 degrees Celsius, respectively.

The weather department said the ongoing heatwave in northwest India is likely to ease from 10 April. —*PTI*

MUDA: ED opposes Lokayukta clean chit to CM

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

A Special Court here on Tuesday heard a petition filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) challenging the 'B Report' filed by the Karnataka Lokayukta police in the MUDA land allotment case, giving a clean chit to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The ED strongly objected to the Lokayukta's closure of the case and argued that the police had failed to consider key evidence shared by the central agency. It also sought the court's permission to submit 27 supporting documents, saying the findings of the Lokayukta police did not account for material facts relevant to the investigation. During the hearing, the ED's counsel emphasized the agency was an independent investigative body and had authority to examine state-level investigative reports, citing precedents from the Supreme Court. —*PTI*

FIR against YouTube channels for news on UP stone-pelting

KANPUR, 8 APRIL

Police in Kanpur have filed an FIR against unidentified individuals and several YouTube channels for allegedly spreading false rumours of stone-pelting during a Ram Navami procession in Moolganj. The misinformation reportedly caused panic among participants as the procession moved from Naya Chowk to Meston Road via Misri Bazar on Sunday. Additional Commissioner of Police Harish Chander refuted claims that any right-wing Hindu outfit members were named in the FIR, calling such reports baseless. The complaint, lodged by Sub-Inspector Ramanand, accused individuals and online platforms of circulating the rumour to incite unrest. The crime branch, cyber cell, and local intelligence are investigating. —*PTI*

23 yrs after Godhra train fire, 3 charged as minors convicted

GODHRA, 8 APRIL

A juvenile justice board in Gujarat's Panchmahal district on Tuesday sentenced three individuals, accused as minors, to a remand home for three years for their involvement in the Godhra carnage. They were fined with Rs 10,000 each, while two others were acquitted. They were part of the mob that set ablaze the S-6 coach of the Sabarmati Express' coming from Ayodhya on 27 February, 2002, killing 59 'kar sevaks'. Over 1,000 people of a minority community were killed in the communal riots that ensued. —*PTI*

BBMP imposes ban on meat sale for Mahavir Jayanthi

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

In observance of Mahavir Jayanti, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has announced a complete ban on animal slaughter and the sale of meat within the city on Thursday, 10 April 2025. A statement from the BBMP's Animal Husbandry Department confirmed that both slaughterhouses and meat shops must remain closed for the entire day to honour the religious significance of the festival. The BBMP has called on all vendors and establishments to adhere strictly to this directive. —*PTI*

India and Dubai to boost defence ties

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

India and the UAE Tuesday agreed to boost defence ties, including possible co-development of military equipment, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held talks with Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, focusing on cooperation in strategic domains.

Following his meeting with Al Maktoum, Modi said the Dubai Crown Prince's "special" visit to India paved the way for a stronger bilateral collaboration.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Modi and Al Maktoum discussed Dubai's key role in strengthening India-UAE ties across defence, trade, technology, space and connectivity and people-to-people ties.

After his meeting with the visiting dignitary, Singh said India is eager to work closely with the Gulf nation in the defence sector, including in co-production and co-development projects.

Following the landmark visit of Modi to UAE in August 2015, bilateral relations between the two countries were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

The bilateral trade and investment ties witnessed a major expansion after the two sides inked a comprehensive economic partnership agreement in 2022.

Singh said both India and the UAE are committed to working towards "peace and prosperity" in the region.

Defence Ministry said Singh and Al Maktoum acknowledged that defence cooperation needs to be scaled up in line with the vision and determination of Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. —*PTI*

Crown Prince of Dubai UAE Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum with PM Narendra Modi in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

After tariffs, EAM holds talk with Rubio

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has agreed on the need for early conclusion of the proposed India-US bilateral trade deal.

The issue figured prominently during a phone conversation between Jaishankar and Rubio on 7 April. It was the first high-level contact between the two countries after announcement of the tariffs.

The external affairs minister and Rubio exchanged perspectives on the Indo-Pacific, the Indian subcontinent, Europe, Middle East and the Caribbean.

"Agreed on the importance of the early conclusion of the bilateral trade agreement. Look forward to remaining in touch," Jaishankar said on X.

Following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Trump in Washington DC in February, the two sides decided to negotiate the first tranche of the bilateral trade agreement by fall 2025.

Citing New Delhi's imposition of high import duties on American goods, the US has announced 26 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India.

The 26 per cent duty is over and above the existing duty being faced by Indian goods in the US. —*PTI*

PARENTAL NOD MUST

No livestream and DM on Instagram for teens under 16

LONDON, 8 APRIL

In a measure to increase safety for children, teenagers using social media, Instagram users under 16 will not be able to livestream or unblur nudity in direct messages they've received without parental approval, owner Meta Platforms said Tuesday.

The social media company also said it was extending safeguards for users under 18 to Facebook and Messenger. Meta launched its teen account program for Instagram in September to give parents more options to supervise their children's online activity amid a growing backlash against how social media affects the lives of young people.

The latest changes will roll out first to users in the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia, before going out to global users in the following months. Meta said at least 54 million teen accounts have been set up since the program launched in September.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Under the changes, teens under 16 are blocked from using Instagram Live unless parents give permission. They also need permission to "turn off our feature that blurs images containing suspected nudity" in direct messages, the company said in a blog post.

These will include protections already in place for teen Instagram users, including setting teen accounts to private by default, blocking private messages from strangers, strict limits on sensitive content like fight videos, reminders to get off the app after 60 minutes and notifications that are halted during bedtime hours. "Teen Accounts on Facebook and Messenger will offer similar, automatic protections to limit inappropriate content and unwanted contact, as well as ways to ensure teens' time is well spent," Meta said. —*PTI*

Women beaten for not speaking in Marathi

THANE, 8 APRIL

In a shocking incident in Dombivli, two women, one of whom was holding a baby, were assaulted for allegedly saying "excuse me" instead of speaking in Marathi. The altercation, which occurred on Tuesday morning, was captured on video and has since gone viral, prompting an investigation by local police.

The women were returning to their housing society on a scooter when the rider spoke to a young man blocking the entrance. The man reportedly took offence and demanded that she communicate in Marathi. Following a physical confrontation, he allegedly twisted the arm of the pillion rider. Soon after, several family members of the attacker joined in, overpowering the two women without regard for the nine-month-old infant.

Eyewitnesses condemned the attack, emphasising that "excuse me" is a common courteous expression, and the response from the accused was entirely unwarranted. Senior Inspector Sanjay Pawar from the Vishnu Nagar police station confirmed that a preliminary investigation is underway, although no formal First Information Report (FIR) has been filed yet. —*PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Man arrested for killing ex-lover's husband in Kengeri

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

Kengeri police have arrested a person who allegedly killed a 32-year-old man near Turahalli forest in Banashankari 6th Stage on Sunday night. The accused, identified as Dadapeer, allegedly killed Sameer by hitting him on the head with an iron rod. Investigations revealed that Dadapeer had been in a premarital relationship with Sameer's wife, which reportedly led to tensions and ultimately, the murder. "The murder was driven by personal enmity rooted in an old relationship. The accused has confessed. We are also probing the possible involvement of the victim's wife," Deputy Commissioner of Police S Girish told Salar News. Sameer, was found dead on the roadside near Turahalli forest. *—Salar News*

Patil seeks int'l status for Hubballi, Belagavi airports

BENGALURU 8 APRIL

State Infrastructure Minister MB Patil on Tuesday called for upgrading the Hubballi and Belagavi airports to international standards, citing growing passenger traffic and regional demand. He directed the officials to submit a proposal to the Centre, recommending international status for the two airports. Chairing a meeting with senior officials of flight operator companies, Patil emphasised improving air connectivity to six cities including Kalaburagi. Kalaburagi District In-charge Minister Priyank Kharge was also present at the meeting. The discussion also focussed on improving flight connectivity to intra-State and inter-State destinations. Representatives from major airlines participated in the discussions. *—PTI*

Private bus operators demand 15% fare hike

UDUPI, 8 APRIL

The Private Bus Operators' Association in Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts demanded a 15 per cent hike in fares for private buses operating across all sectors, including national highway routes. Association President Kuilady Suresh Nayak said on Tuesday that they have written to State Transport Department regarding the demand. According to him, following the recent diesel price hik by the State government, private bus operators have been incurring losses on all routes in the two coastal districts. "The recent diesel price hike by the State government has had cascading effect on bus operators, particularly private ones," Nayak said. On 1 April, government increased sales tax on diesel to 21.17 per cent, effective from Tuesday. As a result, diesel prices have risen by Rs 2 per litre, bringing retail price to Rs 91.02. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

3 siblings drown in Visvesvaraya Canal in Mysuru

MANDYA, 8 APRIL

Three siblings, including a young girl, have tragically drowned in the Visvesvaraya canal in Mysuru, police confirmed on Tuesday. The incident occurred on Monday evening when the children went to the canal to play. It is believed that one child fell into the water accidentally, leading the others to attempt a rescue, resulting in their drownings. Family members revealed that the girl had recently completed her SSLC examinations this year. Authorities are investigating the circumstances surrounding this heartbreaking incident. *—PTI*

Price hike: DKS asks BJP to protest against Centre

BJP says Cong increased the prices of 48 essential items

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

With the Centre hiking the cooking gas price and excise duty on petrol and diesel, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday criticised the BJP that takes out protest march against the State government focusing on issues including price hike.

He urged the State unit of BJP to take out their march, Janakrosha Yatre, against their own government at the Centre instead.

The State BJP on Monday launched its 16-day Janakrosha Yatre, a State-wide campaign criticising the Congress government for price hike and four per cent reservation for Muslims in government contracts, besides alleged diversion of funds meant for SC/ST sub-plan.

"Namaskara to my BJP friends. You are all doing Janakrosha Yatre. I congratulate all of you. But at the same time the Government of India, your BJP government, has hiked the prices of petrol, diesel and gas," Shivakumar said on Tuesday.

"I wish you all the best, you have to continue your Janakrosha Yatre against the BJP government," he added.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said the Janakrosha Yatre was a farce. "Now I want to know the reaction of the BJP leaders in the State. They should explain why the Central government is continuously increasing the prices of petroleum products even though the price of crude oil is falling in the international market."

Congress Women's Wing protests against the Centre for increasing LPG price, in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

In a post on X, he said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself has smeared ink on the faces of BJP leaders who are trying to put the blame of the price hike on Congress.

Meaanwhile, sccusing the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government of increasing the prices of 48 essential commodities in Karnataka since assuming office, State BJP President BY Vijayendra on Tuesday claimed it appeared as though the Chief Minister had formed an expert committee solely for price hikes.

Speaking to reporters, he claimed that "no other State government had burdened the common people to this extent." "This government has increased the prices of water, petrol, and diesel. They are even imposing taxes on garbage. The price of milk has gone up by Rs 9 under this government. Petrol and diesel tax has been hiked by Rs 7.50 since the Siddaramaiah government came to power," Vijayendra said.

"Is Siddaramaiah punishing the people by increasing the prices of 48 essential items? Or is it Prime Minister Modi doing it?" he asked. *—PTI*

FACES STRONG CRITICISM

Parameshwara sorry for molestation jibe

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

A day after he found himself in a controversy for his remarks over the recent molestation incident here, State Home Minister G Parameshwara on Tuesday said, his statement was not understood properly and it was distorted. He also said that he would express regret if it has caused pain to anyone, especially the women.

Responding to an incident where a woman was molested while walking in Suddaguntepalya on 3 April, Parameshwara on Monday said, "Police are working continuously round-the-clock braving rain and cold. That is why there is peace in City. In a big city like Bengaluru, incidents like this do take place here and there."

This statement sparked a controversy, eliciting a strong criticism from opposition BJP and the National Commission for Women. Parameshwara said on Tuesday, "Yesterday my statement has not been properly understood by you (media), and other platforms too have understood it differently. I'm always for women's protection. As a Home Minister I have implemented various programmes like the Nirbhaya scheme."

"If my statement has caused pain to anyone – our sisters, mothers – I express regret," he added. *—PTI*

Parameshwara. **PHOTO: PTI**

Cops intensify search for suspect

Following criticism of remarks made by State Home Minister G Parameshwara regarding a recent molestation case, City police have launched a concerted effort to apprehend the accused. Police Commissioner B Dayananda confirmed over 300 CCTV footages are being reviewed to identify the suspect. The Commissioner assured that both day and night patrols are being conducted regularly. *—PTI*

State to act against 'unsafe' bottled water

State Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao highlighted that of the 255 analyses completed, 95 samples were deemed unsafe **PHOTO: PTI**

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

State Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao has announced that legal action will be taken against companies supplying "unsafe" and "substandard" bottled drinking water.

This warning follows a survey by the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department, revealing that only 72 of 255 bottled water samples tested were safe for consumption.

Rao highlighted that of the 255 analyses completed, 95 samples were deemed unsafe—failing microbiological or chemical tests due to the presence of pesticides, chemicals, or bacteria. "We will be taking legal action against all companies supplying these unsafe water bottles," he stated.

As part of an extensive campaign, 296 drinking water samples were collected for analysis, and additional testing is ongoing for various food products. Inspections of 590 hotels and restaurants led to notices issued to 214 establishments for non-compliance with pest control regulations, with 11 fined a total of Rs 115,000.

A total of 1,891 drug samples were analysed recently, resulting in 41 being classified as "Not of Standard Quality." Rao noted that enforcement actions are crucial, stating, "The goal is to raise awareness and ensure that food production quality improves across Satet." *—PTI*

GOLD SMUGGLING: HC DIRECTS CENTRE TO CURB DEFAMATORY MEDIA POSTS

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

State High Court on Tuesday directed the union government to ensure that media outlets refrain from airing or publishing defamatory or unverified reports against Kannada film actress Ranya Rao and her stepfather, senior IPS officer K Ramchandra Rao. The directive came in response to complaints that certain media organisations continued to broadcast content tarnishing their reputation despite a prior court-imposed restriction.

Justice M Nagaprasanna issued the reminder after the counsel for Ramchandra Rao informed the bench that some outlets were still airing objectionable material in violation of the court's 18 March order. That earlier ruling had directed the Centre to take necessary steps to prevent spread of false or defamatory coverage involving father-daughter duo.

The matter is linked to arrest of Ranya Rao for her alleged gold smuggling racket. *—PTI*

ED raids 10 places in cooperative bank scam

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday conducted simultaneous searches at 10 locations in City and Shivamogga in connection with district cooperative bank scam, the agency said.

Federal agency had specific inputs under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, it said. Officials said, searches are aimed at gathering evidence related to suspected financial irregularities and money laundering linked to the cooperative bank.

ED has been tracking multiple leads following reports of misappropriation of funds in three banks. *—ANI*

HDK bins BJP, JD(S) rift rumour

MANDYA, 8 APRIL

Dismissing reports of discord between the opposition BJP and JD(S) in State, Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Tuesday said there is no threat to the alliance.

However, acknowledging that leaders from both parties have felt the need to establish a coordination committee, the JD(S) state president downplayed his party's absence from the BJP's statewide campaign against the Congress government.

He said the campaign was a BJP initiative aimed at strengthening its organisation.

"Several senior leaders from both parties want a coordination committee to be formed, but there is no threat to the alliance," Kumaraswamy said in response to a question.

Speaking to reporters, he said, "There is no crack in the alliance. We are secure and strong. Both parties are currently focused on strengthening their respective organisations."

Asked why he or any JD(S) leaders were not part of the BJP's 'Janakrosha Yatre', Kumaraswamy said, "It is the BJP's campaign, also aimed at strengthening its organisation. We were not invited to participate.

Murmurs of discord between the two parties surfaced when JD(S) floor leader in the Assembly, CB Suresh Babu, recently expressed disappointment over the BJP not inviting JD(S) to participate in its protests against the Congress government.

Both Babu and JD(S) youth wing president Nikhil Kumaraswamy have demanded the formation of a coordination committee comprising leaders from both parties to ensure better collaboration. *—PTI*

Men disguise as women to claim MGNREGA wages in Yadgir

YADGIR, 8 APRIL

A scam has been uncovered in Maldar, Yadgir district, where men disguised as women to fraudulently claim wages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA). The incident, involving fake records created for nala desilting work worth Rs 3 lakh, came to light after photos showing men in sarees went viral on social media on Monday.

Zilla Panchayat CEO Lavesh Oradiya confirmed that the allegations were true, with four men using women's names to manipulate MGNREGA funds. He told Salar News that action had already been taken in February based on complaints, and BFT (Barefoot Technician) Viresh, a contract worker, was suspended. Oradiya also clarified that no MGNREGA funds related to this work had been released.

The scam was further exposed when fake attendance photos were uploaded via the National Mobile Monitoring Software **PHOTO: SALAR**

The scam was further exposed when fake attendance photos were uploaded via the National Mobile Monitoring Software (NMMS) app to falsely generate wage bills. The officials responsible for uploading the attendance were involved in manipulating records.

Meanwhile, Taluk Panchayat Executive Officer Ramappa Doddmani urged labourers to utilize NREGA opportunities to prevent migration during the summer. *—Salar News*

Darshan **PHOTO: PTI**

COURT RAPS DARSHAN FOR SKIPPING HEARING

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

A special court in City has issued a stern warning to Kannada actor Darshan Thogudeepa for his failure to attend a hearing in the Renukaswamy murder case, citing health issues as the reason for his absence.

During the proceedings at the CCH 57th Court, key accused Pavithra Gowda and several others were present, while Darshan, listed as Accused No. 1 (A1), was not. His legal representatives informed the court that the actor was suffering from severe back pain exacerbated by his ongoing film shoot for 'The Devil.' The defence presented a copy of a High Court order allowing Darshan to travel beyond City under his bail conditions.

However, the presiding judge expressed dissatisfaction with this explanation and emphasized that the actor must be present for all future hearings. Some co-accused, including Nandish, Jagadish, and others, attended and requested the return of mobile phones seized by police. Court has adjourned the next hearing to 20 May, underscoring necessity of Darshan's presence. Darshan and actress Pavithra Gowda, along with 15 others, were arrested in connection with murder of Renukaswamy, a resident of Chitradurga district, on 9 June last year. After spending 131 days in custody, Darshan was granted interim bail on medical grounds on 30 October, followed by regular bail from State High Court on 13 December, despite opposition from the City Police Commissioner. *—Salar News*

PASS PERCENTAGE DROPS

Girls outshine boys to top in Second PUC exam

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

State's Second PUC examination results for the 2024-25 academic year were declared on Tuesday, with girls outshining boys across all streams—Arts, Commerce, and Science.

The overall pass percentage dropped to 73.45 per cent from 81.15 per cent last year, with 6,37,805 students appearing for the exams, of whom 4,68,439 passed.

The top scorers this year include Sanjana Bai from Ballari in Arts (597/600) and Deepashree from Dakshina Kannada in Commerce (599/600). Amoolya Kamat from Dakshina Kannada and Deeksha R from Shivamogga share the top rank in Science (599/600). Bengaluru's Pratiksha secured third rank in Commerce with 597 marks.

Rank holders: Deeksha (Science), Deepashree (Commerce), K Nirmala and Sanjana Bai (Arts) **PHOTO: SALAR**

Bai, the daughter of a truck driver from Mariyammanahalli in Vijayanagar, told Salar News. "I never studied more than four hours a day. My teachers and family kept me going,"

City region continued its strong showing, with City South recording a pass percentage of 85.36 per cent and City North at 83.31 per cent. Udupi topped the State with 93.90 per cent, followed by Dakshina Kannada at 93.57 per cent. At the bottom of the table was Yadgir with just 48.45 per cent.

Amoolya Kamat, the science topper with 599 marks, said, "I studied for long hours after classes and stayed focused. My advice is to not burn out — plan smart, aim clear and stick to it."

Commerce topper Deepashree, also scoring 599, told Salar Newzs she had hoped for 595 but didn't expect a State rank. *—Salar News*

STATS

Total students appeared: 6,37,805

BOYS 2,92,111 | GIRLS 3,45,694

Total students passed: 4,68,439

BOYS 1,99,227 | GIRLS 2,69,212

Village girl secures 3rd rank in Commerce

Kolar, 8 April

HB Bhargavi, a student from Mahila Samaja PU College, has secured 3rd rank in Commerce stream with 597 marks in the Second PU exams. Hailing from Hudukula village in Bangarpet taluk, Bhargavi achieved centum scores in Economics, Business Studies, Accountancy, and Statistics. Despite daily commute, her dedication helped her excel. *—Salar News*

BKU leader and family shot dead in road rage in UP

FATEHPUR, 8 APRIL

Panic spread through Akhri village in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur district on Tuesday after a Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader, his son, and younger brother were shot dead following a dispute. The deceased were BKU district president Pappu Singh, 50, his son Abhay Singh, 22, and brother Pinku Singh, 45. The altercation began when former village head Suresh Kumar, also known as Munnu, asked Pappu Singh to move his tractor, which was blocking the road. Kumar's sons and associates then joined in and opened fire. Police have arrested Suresh Kumar, his son and his two sons, suspecting an old political rivalry as the motive. *—PTI*

Pawan Kalyan's son injured in Singapore blaze

SINGAPORE, 8 APRIL

A tragic fire broke out at a three-storey shophouse on River Valley Road near Singapore's Central Business District, killing a 10-year-old girl and injuring 20 others, including Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's younger son, Mark Shankar. The fire occurred at a building housing various businesses, including a cooking school, theatre group, and robotics institute for children. Mark suffered burns to his hands and legs, along with lung damage from smoke inhalation, and is receiving hospital treatment. Jana Sena Party confirmed Pawan Kalyan will travel to Singapore soon. Rescue efforts saw bystanders and firefighters saving children trapped on a ledge. Rescue ladders and a combined platform ladder were deployed to evacuate people from the third-floor ledge. Around 80 people were evacuated. Authorities are investigating the cause of the fire, with emergency services focused on patient care and family support. *—PTI*

Bihar grants 30% salary increase for ministers of state

PATNA, 8 APRIL

The Bihar government has approved a 30 per cent increase in salaries and allowances for individuals holding minister of state and deputy minister ranks, as announced following a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. Monthly salaries will rise to Rs 65,000, up from Rs 50,000, alongside an increase in local allowances and daily expenses. Local allowances will be adjusted from Rs 55,000 to Rs 70,000, while daily allowances will increase from Rs 3,000 to Rs 3,500. Currently, all ministers in Chief Minister Kumar's cabinet are cabinet ministers, with no deputy ministers or minister of state in the administration. Additionally, the cabinet approved the creation of over 26,000

PHOTO: X

HC issues notice to cops and Sena MLA in Kamra case

MUMBAI, 8 APRIL

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday issued a notice to Mumbai police and Shiv Sena MLA Murji Patel on comedian Kunal Kamra's plea challenging an FIR lodged against him for allegedly passing a "traitor" jibe at Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. He sought for the FIR to be quashed, claiming the allegations, even if taken at face value, do not constitute an offence. The comedian also sought the HC to protect him from any coercive action including arrest, seizure of his personal electronic devices and examination of his financial transactions and accounts. A division bench of Justices Sarang Kotwal and SM Modak said it would hear Kamra's petition on 16 April. *—PTI*

SC says Guv can't roadblock, chokehold State Legislature

'Any action against choice of the people reneges Guv of oath'

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Supreme Court on Monday said the Governor must be conscious to not create "roadblocks or chokehold" the state Legislature in order "to thwart and break the will of the people".

A bench made these observations while declaring as illegal the Tamil Nadu Governor's withholding of the assent on ten bills re-enacted by the State Assembly and their reservation for the President.

The bench, while delivering its judgment, pointed out that under Article 200 of the Constitution, the Governor is bound to act on the aid and advice of the council of ministers and does not have the discretion to withhold assent indefinitely or reserve bills for the President unless the bills differ from those previously presented.

The bench said it was not open for Governor to reserve the bill for consideration of President after it was presented to him for the second time.

It said Governor must assent to the bills produced before him in the second round and the only exception was that the bill in the second instance

was different from the first one.

"Any action contrary to the express choice of the people, in other words, the state legislature, would be a renege of his (Governor) constitutional oath," the bench said.

The bench emphasised that the Governor's role should be that of a "friend, philosopher, and guide" who helps in conflict resolution, ensuring the smooth functioning of the state legislature, rather than hindering it and criticised the Governor for allowing political considerations to influence his actions. *—PTI*

Kerala seeks transfer of plea against Guv to another SC bench

New Delhi, 8 April

The Kerala government on Tuesday urged the Supreme Court that its petition against the Governor over the delay in approving bills passed by the state assembly be transferred to a bench led by Justice JB Pardiwala. A bench led by Justice Pardiwala granted a major relief to the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government in a similar plea. The Kerala government, represented by senior advocate KK Venugopal, informed a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar that its plea, being similar in nature, be sent to Justice Pardiwala's bench. "It has been almost two years. Bills are pending," Venugopal said. The CJI said any such decision would be on the next hearing and posted the plea in the week of 13 May.

—PTI

Tamil Nadu's legal battle has once again shone light on the entire nation. Our spirit and our resolve remain unshakable.

-Udhayanidhi Stalin, Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister

This verdict is a warning against the tendency of governors usurping the powers of the legislative assembly. This is the victory of democracy.

-Pinarayi Vijayan, Kerala Chief Minister

ISI, BISHNOI LINKS SUSPECTED

BJP leader's home attacked with grenades

CHANDIGARH, 8 APRIL

Unidentified persons hurled a hand grenade at Punjab BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia's Jalandhar residence early Tuesday. Police, who later arrested two persons, believe the attack was fuelled by ISI and Lawrence Bishnoi's gang. No was injured in the blast, which shattered glass panes and damaged Kalia's SUV and motorcycle.

Kalia was at home near Shastri Market in Jalandhar when the explosion took place around 1am.

Police later arrested two persons in connection with the incident and said it was the conspiracy of Pakistan's spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang to create communal tension in Punjab.

"It was a major conspiracy of Pakistan's ISI. Zeeshan Akhtar, who is an associate of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and (Pakistani gangster) Shahzad Bhatti, they had hatched this conspiracy," Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) Arpit Shukla said, adding that police

A policeman at the scene
PHOTO: PTI

also recovered an e-rickshaw used in the crime.

Shukla noted that Zeeshan was involved in the 2024 Bada Siddiqui murder case. He further did not rule out the possible links of the accused with Pakistan-based Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) mastermind Harwinder Singh alias Rinda.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties took on the AAP government asked Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who holds the home portfolio, to resign on moral grounds.

"We used to hear about such incidents in Naxal areas or in Srinagar. These are now happening in Punjab," said Union Minister Ravneet Singh Bittu. *—PTI*

Court orders release of Medha Patkar for 1 year

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Saket District Court on Tuesday ordered the release of social activist, Medha Patkar on one-year probation for good conduct.

The court passed the order taking into account Patkar's age and her not having any previous conviction or offence.

Medha Patkar
PHOTO: PTI

She had challenged her conviction and a five-month sentence in a defamation case filed by Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, VK Saxena in 2001.

The defendant appeared before the court via video conferencing

Additional sessions judge, Vishal Singh passed the order, saying that the sentence must be commensurate with the offence.

There was no ground to deny the convict the benefit of probation.

The court also reduced the compensation of Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1 lakh. It will upload a detailed order later in the day.

Earlier her conviction was upheld by the session court on 2 April.

Her counsel, Sridevi Pannikar said that the appeal against conviction was pending before the high court.

The decision to challenge the sentence will be taken after they receive the order. *—ANI*

Cong set to make massive structural changes

AHMEDABAD, 8 APRIL

Congress is going to have a "massive organisational reshuffle", AICC general secretary KC Venugopal said on Tuesday as the party's top leaders met here and vowed to embark on the "path of social justice" espoused by Sardar Patel.

Briefing reporters after the extended Congress Working Committee meeting at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Memorial here, Venugopal noted that Congress has dedicated this year to a complete restructuring of the party organisation and the issue was discussed at length at the meeting.

"We are going to have a massive organisational reshuffle, and there will be guidelines for the same. Our general secretaries and in-charges are on it," he said.

Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi
PHOTO: PTI

Venugopal also stressed that measures to empower the party's district unit chiefs will be rolled out soon.

AICC General Secretary Sachin Pilot further said the Congress will have District Pradesh Congress (DCC) presidents more empowered than before.

"The accountability, the responsibility and the political strength we have thus given to the district presidents is set to be enhanced," he stressed, noting that it will bolster accountability. *—PTI*

'OUR SARDAR': CONG STAKES CLAIM ON PATEL; ACCUSES BJP, RSS OF LYING

AHMEDABAD, 8 APRIL

Emphasising its claim on the legacy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Congress on Tuesday vowed to follow the principles of the country's first home minister to defeat divisive forces and accused the BJP-RSS of "lying" as well as spreading "propaganda" that he and Jawaharlal Nehru had strained ties.

The party passed a resolution to mark the 150th birth anniversary year of Patel and said it is determined to emulate the resoluteness of the 'Iron Man of India' by fighting the frenzy of religious polarisation.

"Today, the ideology of violence and communalism is pushing the country into an abyss of hatred, based on the divisions of religious polarisation," said the resolution titled "Flag-bearer of freedom movement- Our Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel".

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge said that Patel's ideology was contrary to the ideas of the RSS and he had even banned the organisation.

"It is laughable that today the people of that organisation claim Sardar Patel's legacy," he said. *—PTI*

Protest rallies against Waqf Amendment Act in Manipur

IMPHAL, 8 APRIL

Protestors walked four kilometres in Manipur's Imphal and Bishnupur districts demanding withdrawal of Waqf Amendment Act on Tuesday, officials said.

Many women wearing burqa also attended the protest march.

Md Nasir, a protester said, "Waqf Act violates the Constitution. It targets the minority Muslims and is a step to break the spirit of a united India. We condemn this Act and government's ploy to usurp our ancestral properties. Waqf belongs to the Ummah."

At Khumidok in Imphal East district, protesters formed a human chain demanding withdrawal of the Act.

Meitei Pangals community members protest against the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025, in Thoubal on Tuesday ***PHOTO: ANI***

Security forces with anti-riot equipment have been deployed across the Muslim-dominated Lilong area in Manipur's Thoubal district in the wake of violent protests there. Vigil has also been heightened in parts of Imphal East district, they said. *—PTI*

J&K Assembly adjourned for 2nd consecutive day over Waqf Act

JAMMU, 8 APRIL

The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly was adjourned for the day on Tuesday for a second consecutive day, following a ruckus by the National Conference (NC), Congress, PDP and other members over the Speaker disallowing adjournment of business to discuss the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

As the House assembled for the day, NC members led by Salman Sagar, Tanvir Sadiq and Peoples Conference member Sajad Gani Lone raised the issue of adjourning the Budget Session to discuss the Act.

As Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather asked them to allow the Question Hour to begin, members of the NC, Congress, People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Independents trooped into the well of the House, raising slogans and demanding the withdrawal of the "black law".

Three opposition legislators led by People's Conference leader Sajad Gani Lone presented a no-confidence motion against Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather. Noisy scenes were seen, as PDP member Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra stormed into the well of the House, demanding the immediate passage of the resolution moved by his party, leading to a heated exchange.

When Parra attempted to enter the well of the House, the Speaker directed the marshals to evict him.

The House was then adjourned for the day. *—PTI*

3 more groups sever Hurriyat ties: Shah

Srinagar, 8 April

The Jammu Kashmir Islamic Political Party, Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Democratic League and Kashmir Freedom Front have disassociated themselves from separatists conglomerate Hurriyat Conference, Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced on Tuesday. Eleven such organisations in Jammu and Kashmir have shunned separatism so far. Shah is reviewing development projects and the security situaiton in the state.

CAUGHT WITH PANTS DOWN

TMC MPs infighting spills out after BJP leaks WhatsApp chats

KOLKATA, 8 APRIL

The BJP may have exposed Trinamool Congress's infighting. BJP leader Amit Malviya on Tuesday shared videos purportedly showing MP Kalyan Banerjee shouting at his colleagues. Malviya also shared some screenshots, purportedly from a chat group of the TMC MPs which showed a subsequent argument between Banerjee and TMC MP Kirti Azad.

The controversy began on 4 April when a TMC delegation visited the Election Commission to submit a memorandum regarding duplicate voter identity cards.

TMC MP Mahua Moitra reportedly confronted Kalyan Banerjee -- the party's chief whip in Lok Sabha -- for allegedly excluding her from the list of signatories on the memorandum.

An altercation broke out between the two, with Banerjee claiming that Moitra asked the security to arrest him.

As the incident came to the fore, another senior TMC MP, Saugata Roy, said Moitra was crying after the altercation.

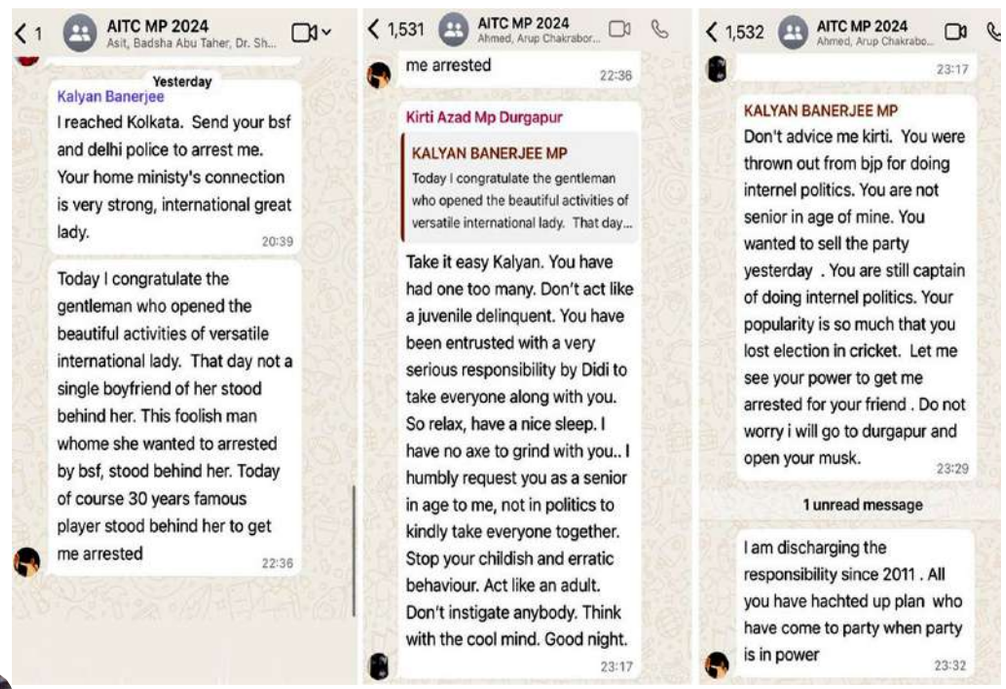
"He has a history -- from calling Jyotiraditya Scindia a 'lady killer' to throwing a bottle during a JPC meeting." Roy said.

Both MPs later reportedly lodged complaints with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Screenshots of the subsequent argument , shared by Malviya on social media, showed Banerjee making several snide remarks directed at a "versatile international lady".

"Send your BSF and Delhi Police to arrest me. Your home ministry's connection is very strong, international great lady," Banerjee wrote. "That day not a single boyfriend stood behind her . Today, of course famous player stood behind her to get me arrested."

Former cricketer Azad, who has previously backed Moitra, responded sharply, saying Banerjee was behaving like a "juvenile delinquent". *—PTI*


AITC MP 2024
Asit, Badsha Abu Taher, Dr. Sh...
Yesterday
Kalyan Banerjee
I reached Kolkata. Send your bsf and delhi police to arrest me. Your home ministy's connection is very strong, international great lady.
20:39
Today I congratulate the gentleman who opened the beautiful activities of versatile international lady. That day not a single boyfriend of her stood behind her. This foolish man whome she wanted to arrested by bsf, stood behind her. Today of course 30 years famous player stood behind her to get me arrested
22:36
1,531
AITC MP 2024
Ahmed, Arup Chakrabor...
me arrested
22:36
Kirti Azad Mp Durgapur
KALYAN BANERJEE MP
Today I congratulate the gentleman who opened the beautiful activities of versatile international lady. That day...
Take it easy Kalyan. You have had one too many. Don't act like a juvenile delinquent. You have been entrusted with a very serious responsibility by Didi to take everyone along with you. So relax, have a nice sleep. I have no axe to grind with you.. I humbly request you as a senior in age to me, not in politics to kindly take everyone together. Stop your childish and erratic behaviour. Act like an adult. Don't instigate anybody. Think with the cool mind. Good night.
23:17
1,532
AITC MP 2024
Ahmed, Arup Chakrabo...
23:17
KALYAN BANERJEE MP
Don't advice me kirti. You were thrown out from bjp for doing internel politics. You are not senior in age of mine. You wanted to sell the party yesterday . You are still captain of doing internel politics. Your popularity is so much that you lost election in cricket. Let me see your power to get me arrested for your friend . Do not worry i will go to durgapur and open your musk.
23:29
1 unread message
I am discharging the responsibility since 2011 . All you have hachted up plan who have come to party when party is in power
23:32

The purported TMC WhatsApp fight between MP Kriti Azad and Kalyan Banerjee after the latter allegedly had a verbal spat with Mahua Moitra ***PHOTO: X @amitmalviya***

PHOTO: X

Renowned folk dancer Ram Sahay Panday dies at 92

BHOPAL, 8 APRIL

Internationally acclaimed folk dance artist Ram Sahay Panday, a recipient of the Padma Shri, passed away in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district early Tuesday following a prolonged illness, according to family sources. He was 92. A celebrated exponent of the Rai folk dance from the Bundelkhand region, Panday spent over six decades promoting the art form, blending it with the rhythmic beats of the Mridangam. He performed more than 100 times across 18 countries, earning global recognition for Rai. Panday was awarded the Padma Shri in 2022. —*PTI*

Three UP cops suspended over religious flag row

PRAYAGRAJ, 8 APRIL

A sub-inspector and two constables have been suspended for negligence after a religious flag was hoisted at the Gazi Miyan Dargah in Prayagraj's Sikandra area on Ram Navami. The suspended officers include Bahariya outpost in-charge Ravi Katiyar and constables Anshu Kumar and Sunil Kumar Yadav. The action followed an inquiry by Additional DCP Pushkar Verma. A case was filed on Sunday against three named individuals and several unidentified persons. One of the main accused, Manendra Singh, alleged to have led the group, was arrested on Monday. The group reportedly raised religious slogans and placed flags at the dargah's gate before being dispersed by police. The shrine, which houses five mausoleums, is visited by both Hindu and Muslim devotees. Deputy Commissioner Kuldeep Singh Gunawat confirmed the suspensions. —*PTI*

T'puram airport to halt flights for religious march

T'PURAM, 8 APRIL

Flight operations at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport will be halted for over four hours on 11 April to facilitate the traditional 'Painkuni Arattu' procession of Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, taking place across the runway. The suspension will be from 4.45pm to 9pm, as confirmed by Thiruvananthapuram International Airport Ltd (TIAL). Airline passengers are advised to check with their respective carriers for updated flight timings. This ritual, which involves transporting temple idols to Shangumugham Beach for a ceremonial bath, has been observed for centuries, even following the airport's establishment in 1932. The tradition honours the wishes of the late Travancore King Sree Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma, who decreed that the airport should accommodate the sacred event twice a year. —*PTI*

900 engines stolen over 5yrs from KIA plant in Andhra

PENUKONDA, APRIL 8

Kia has lodged a complaint with local police regarding the alleged theft of 900 engines from its manufacturing plant in Sri Sathyasai district. This criminal activity is believed to have begun nearly five years ago in 2020. According to Penukonda sub-divisional police officer Y. Venkateshwarlu, the engines were reportedly stolen both en route to the plant and from within the facility itself. The police suspect that the theft may be an 'inside job', implicating both former and current employees of Kia, as it would be challenging to move such items without management's knowledge. Investigative teams have been formed, and records are being scrutinised as the police delve deeper into the case. —*PTI*

SC partly stalls CBI probe into WB job scam

Says agency can investigate other aspects except for creation of supernumerary posts

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Supreme Court on Tuesday set aside the part of the Calcutta High Court judgement ordering a CBI probe into the West Bengal cabinet's decision to create supernumerary posts in the SCC teacher's appointments.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar, however, made it clear the probe into other aspects related to the appointment of 25,753 teachers and staffers in West Bengal's state-run and aided school would continue.

A "supernumerary post" refers to a temporary position created to accommodate an employee who is entitled to a regular post that is currently unavailable.

While delivering the verdict, the bench had made it clear it will independently deal with the plea raised by the West Bengal government "with regard to the direction of investigation by the CBI on the decision taken to create

supernumerary posts".

On Tuesday, the bench took up this particular aspect of the plea raised by the state government and said, "Having regard to aforesaid discussion, we are of the view that the high court was not justified in referring the issue of creation of supernumerary post posts to the CBI pursuant to the cabinet decision."

The bench referred to constitutional schemes on cabinet decisions and said they cannot be questioned in a court of law.

- A "supernumerary post" refers to a temporary position created to accommodate an employee who is entitled to a regular post that is currently unavailable.
- On Tuesday, the bench took up this particular aspect of the plea

"We clarify that our observations in this order are limited to the extent of direction to investigate the creation of supernumerary posts and not in any way reflect upon the investigation and chargesheets filed by CBI in other aspects," the CJI said.

The apex court on 3 April invalidated the appointment of 25,753 teachers and staffers, terming the entire selection process "vitiated and tainted". —*PTI*

TN, TASMAC withdraw transfer pleas

New Delhi, 8 April

The Tamil Nadu government and its marketing corporation TASMAC on Tuesday withdrew from the Supreme Court the pleas to transfer from the Madras High Court to another high court their petitions against the recent ED action on the state-run liquor retailer.

During a brief hearing, the court observed that the issues should be decided by the Madras HC. —*PTI*

Apex court bars courts from 'moral policing'

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said that courts are not supposed to do moral policing, while setting aside High Court order imposing Rs 10 lakh costs each on musician Vishal Dadlani and political activist Tehseen Poonawalla over certain tweets they posted in 2016 mocking a Jain monk.

In 2019, the Punjab and Haryana High Court quashed the criminal case filed against them but imposed costs on them.

"What kind of order is passed by the court? The court is not supposed to do moral policing. This is not a function of the court at all," said a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan during the hearing of the case today.

The bench further said that High Court should not have imposed costs on the two after holding that no offence was made out against them and upholding their fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

"Perhaps High Court was swayed by the fact that the appellant and the other accused made criticism of a priest of a particular religion," the apex court said.

The case arose from Dadlani's tweets criticising Jain priest Tarun Sagar's nude appearance and the Haryana government's action of calling him to the Legislative Assembly. Poonawala posted a photoshopped image of a semi-nude woman alongside the Jain saint. —*ANI*

Rename Khultabad, home to Aurangzeb tomb, says minister

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR/ SAMBHAL, 8 APRIL

Maharashtra minister Sanjay Shirsat said the name of Khultabad town, where the tomb of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb is located, will be changed to Ratnapur.

Speaking to reporters, Shirsat said Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar was earlier known as Khadki, and later renamed as Aurangabad.

"Likewise, Khultabad was earlier known as Ratnapur. Names of many places were changed during the reign of Aurangzeb. We are going to change the name of Khultabad to Ratnapur," the Shiv Sena leader said. "We are conducting a process of changing the names of all those places having 'bad' (like Auranga'bad') in their names."

The graves of Aurangzeb, his son Azam Shah, Nizam Asaf Jah and many others are located in the area.

Similarly, in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), labelled the Shahi Jama Masjid as "Juma Masjid" in its new signboard.

Sanjay Shirsat ***PHOTO: PTI***

ASI's counsel Vishnu Sharma told PTI, "An ASI board was earlier installed outside the mosque but was removed and replaced with a board calling it 'Shahi Jama Masjid'. The new board has been issued in accordance with the name recorded in ASI documents, which is 'Juma Masjid'."

Sharma said a similar blue ASI board is already present inside the mosque premises bearing the same name.

On 24 November last year, communal violence erupted in Sambhal during an ASI of the mosque, resulting in four deaths and several other injuries. Similarly, in Nagpur, communal tensions flared after the right wing VHP demanded for the Aurangzeb's tomb and allegedly burnt the Quranic inscriptions. —*PTI*

Drunken Cong leader mows down 3

JAIPUR, 8 APRIL

A tragic incident occurred in Jaipur when a drunk SUV driver, identified as Usman Khan, 62, a Congress party leader and factory owner, allegedly ploughed through multiple pedestrians and vehicles, resulting in the deaths of three individuals and leaving six others seriously injured.

The chaos unfolded over a seven-kilometre stretch, starting from MI Road into the narrow lanes of the Nahargarh police station area. Witnesses reported that Khan first collided with a scooty near the Santosh Mata Temple before recklessly continuing along the road, crushing victims and ramming into parked vehicles outside the police station.

Locals and police managed to halt the vehicle when it became lodged in a narrow lane, where Khan was subsequently detained. Additional DCP (North) Bajrang Singh Shekhawat confirmed that Khan was heavily intoxicated at the time of the incident, having lost control of the SUV.

Wreckage of the SUV which Usman Khan rammed into pedestrians in Jaipur on Monday night ***PHOTO: PTI***

Among the injured are Virendra Singh (48), Mamta Kanwar (50), and Deepika Saini (17). All were rushed to Sawai Man Singh Hospital, where Kanwar and Awadhesh Pareek were pronounced dead, with Singh succumbing to injuries on Tuesday morning. —*PTI*

HC upholds death to 5 Hyderabad blast convicts

HYDERABAD, 8 APRIL

The Telangana High Court on Tuesday upheld a trial court's verdict awarding death penalty to five Indian Mujahideen terrorists involved in a bomb blast that killed 18 people and injured 131 in 2013.

A bench of Justice K Lakshman and Justice P Sree Sudha dismissed the appeal filed by the IM operatives. "Confirming the judgment of the trial court," the bench said. On 13 December, 2016 the NIA court convicted the five members, including IM co-founder Mohd Ahmed Sidibapa alias Yasin Bhatkal, Pakistani national Zia-ur-Rahman alias Waqas, Asadullah Akhtar alias Haddi, Tahaseen Akhtar alias Monu and Ajaz Shaikh. —*PTI*

Fake doctor linked to Chh'garh Speaker's death held

BHOPAL/JABALPUR, 8 APRIL

A fraudulent doctor, previously linked to the death of a Chhattisgarh Assembly Speaker, has been arrested in Madhya Pradesh after at least seven patients died following surgeries at Damoh's Mission Hospital. Narendra Vikramaditya Yadav operated under the name Dr John Camm, claiming to be a cardiologist trained in UK.

Yadav was implicated in the 2006 death of then Speaker RP Shukla during a surgery in Bilaspur, raising questions about how he managed to practice again. His qualifications reportedly included dubious medical degrees from various institutions, none of which had verifiable registration.

Local authorities reported that Yadav performed 15 operations, resulting in seven fatalities. —*PTI*

NIA raids places linked to Goldy Brar

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday searched multiple locations, linked with Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) terrorist Satinderjit Singh alias Goldy Brar, across Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, sources said.

The premises belonging to suspects and accused associated with Canada-based terrorist Brar and US-based gangster Randeep Malik were searched in connection with the agency's probe into the December 2024 grenade attacks at Warehouse Club and Human Club at Sector-29 in Gurugram.

"Several electronic and other incriminating materials were recovered during the searches conducted at eight locations in various districts of the two states this morning," the NIA said.

Satinderjit Singh alias Goldy Brar ***PHOTO: X***

The material is being examined by the NIA for clues to unravel the conspiracy behind the bombing incident, in which arms, ammunition and explosives were seized from the accused involved in the attacks, it said.

Soon after the attacks, gangster Rohit Godara had taken responsibility through a social media post, the NIA said.

- The premises belonging to suspects and accused associated with Canada-based terrorist Brar and US-based gangster Randeep Malik were searched in connection with the December 2024 grenade attacks at two places in Gurugram

Subsequent investigations by the NIA exposed Malik and designated individual terrorist Brar, who had earlier threatened and attempted to extort money from the club owners, to have masterminded the attacks, it added. The probe into the case, registered on 2 January, 2025, is continuing, the NIA said. —*PTI*

NEW TRADITION

Bulldozer in Ram Navami procession sparks row

BAREILLY, 8 APRIL

A bulldozer sparked tensions in Faridpur of Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly district after police objected to its inclusion in a Ram Navami procession, triggering a standoff between local BJP leaders and the administration.

The bulldozer, which was part of the procession organised by the Adarsh Ramlila Committee, was on Monday stopped by police who termed its participation "unauthorised" and a "new tradition".

The move led to protests by hundreds of participants, who staged a sit-in blocking the road, raising slogans against the police and administration.

Faridpur Station House Officer Harendra Singh said the procession was eventually completed peacefully.

"There was momentary unrest, but the police maintained a strong overnight vigil in sensitive areas. Normalcy returned on Tuesday morning," Harendra Singh said.

The situation escalated when BJP's Aonla unit President, Adesh Pratap Singh, arrived at the scene and confronted the police. He argued that the bulldozer had been part of the Ram Navami procession for the past five years and accused the police of disrupting traditions.

"We're not trying to disturb the peace," he asserted. —*PTI*

Kerala woman dies after delivery at home

MALAPPURAM, 8 APRIL

The husband of a woman, who died due to excessive bleeding during childbirth at their rented accommodation in Malappuram, has been arrested and booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, police said on Tuesday.

The woman, 35-year-old Asma, gave birth on the evening of 5 April and died due to excessive bleeding the same night, police said.

Sirajudheen is also accused of attempting to destroy the evidence by taking his wife's body to his home in Perumbavoor. He was arrested on Monday night, said Malappuram SP Vishwanadh R. —*PTI*

POTENT THREAT

Ozone pollution impacts crop yields: Study

KOLKATA, 8 APRIL

Ozone pollution, a lesser-known but potent threat, could drastically reduce agricultural yields in the country, according to a new study by IIT-Kharagpur.

Wheat, rice and maize are highly vulnerable to the increasing surface ozone pollution, research by Prof Jayanarayanan Kuttippurath and his team at the Centre for Ocean, River, Atmosphere and Land Sciences (CORAL), IIT-Kharagpur said.

Published under the title 'Surface ozone pollution-driven risks for the yield of major food crops under future climate change scenarios in India', the study noted that to protect crop health and ensure food security, atmospheric pollution must be reduced and

Surface ozone is a strong oxidant that damages plant tissues, leading to visible foliar injuries and reduced crop productivity ***PHOTO: X***

monitored, an IIT-Kharagpur spokesperson said.

Surface ozone is a strong oxidant that damages plant tissues, leading to visible foliar injuries and reduced crop productivity. Using data from the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project phase-6 (CMIP6), the research assessed historical trends and future projections of ozone-induced yield losses in wheat, rice, and maize, he said.

The findings indicate that under high-emission scenarios with insufficient mitigation, wheat yields could suffer an additional 20 per cent reduction, while rice and maize may experience losses of around seven per cent.

The Indo-Gangetic Plain and Central India are particularly vulnerable, where ozone exposure could exceed safe limits by up to six times, the study showed.

This could have severe consequences for global food security, as India is a major food grain exporter to several Asian and African nations, it said.

Implementing effective emission reduction strategies could significantly enhance agricultural productivity and safeguard global food supplies, said the study, which has been published in the prestigious journal 'Environmental Research', the spokesperson added. —*PTI*

Meerut murder accused found pregnant while in jail

MEERUT, 8 APRIL

Following the revelation that Muskan Rastogi, accused of murdering her husband Saurabh Rajput, is pregnant, the deceased's brother, Bablu Rajput, has expressed his willingness to raise the child if DNA tests confirm Saurabh as the father. Muskan, along with her lover Sahil, is currently in custody for allegedly drugging and fatally stabbing Saurabh on 4 March.

Chief Medical Officer Dr Ashok Kataria confirmed Muskan's pregnancy and said she is due for an ultrasound to ascertain its status and duration. "If the child is of my brother Saurabh's, we will adopt and raise the child," Bablu stated to reporters, while no comments have been made by Muskan's family.

The investigation outlined a grisly crime, with reports of

- Muskan, along with her lover Sahil, is currently in custody for killing her husband Saurabh
- On learning that Muskan is pregnant, the deceased's brother Bablu Rajput has expressed his willingness to raise the child if DNA tests confirm Saurabh as the father

Saurabh's body being dismembered and concealed in a cement-filled drum. Muskan allegedly planned the murder since November 2023. Currently, both accused are in judicial custody. Muskan engages in sewing work while Sahil participates in agricultural tasks within the jail. —*PTI*

THE RESURRECTION

Three genetically engineered wolf pups, resembling extinct dire wolves, are now thriving in a secure US location. Created by Colossal Biosciences, the pups—Remus, Romulus, and Khaleesi—currently weigh 80 pounds and are expected to reach 140 pounds at maturity. Scientists used CRISPR technology to modify gray wolf DNA, recreating traits of the dire wolf, which went extinct over 10,000 years ago. These wolves were an inspiration for the fearsome canines in HBO TV series 'Game of Thrones'
PHOTO: PTI

WILL THE US TARIFFS LEAD TO RECESSION?

The tariffs include a 10 per cent blanket duty on nearly all countries and additional import taxes on 60 nations
PHOTO: PTI

President Donald Trump's sharp tariff hikes last week have sent the stock market into a tailspin, raised alarm bells among Wall Street executives, and heightened many economists' worries that the US could tip into recession.

The tariffs, set to take effect Wednesday, include a 10 per cent blanket duty on nearly all countries and additional import taxes on 60 nations. The increases are so large and are taking effect so rapidly that they are likely to be disruptive to the economy, economists say, even if they are partially rolled back through negotiations in the coming weeks or months. Economists at Goldman Sachs have raised their assessment of the odds the US will experience a recession — where the economy shrinks and unemployment rises — to 45 per cent, from 35 per cent last week.

And even that forecast assumes many of the duties are negotiated away or reduced. If not, "we expect to change our forecast to a recession," Jan Hatzius, Goldman's chief economist, and his colleagues said in an analyst note. Other economists are raising similar alarms, with JPMorgan putting the odds of a recession at 60 per cent and projecting inflation will reach 4.4 per cent by the end of this year, up from 2.8 per cent currently.

Should the tariffs remain in place for an extended period, they will likely raise costs and uncertainty for businesses, which could reduce their willingness to hire, invest in new equipment or software, or expand into new markets. Americans could cut back on their spending in the face of higher prices. The economy could start to shrink, after expanding 2.8 per cent in 2024.

So far, most measures of the economy, such as job gains, remain solid. Employers added more jobs than expected in March, the government reported last week, and layoffs remain historically low. Still, surveys show consumers and businesses are increasingly worried about the economic outlook. What everyone from Wall Street investors to economists to officials at the Federal Reserve will be watching closely is whether those concerns lead to a downturn.

Here are some questions and answers about recessions:

Not yet. But one development that has sparked widespread fear is a real-time economy tracker maintained by the Federal Reserve's Atlanta branch.

It now indicates that the economy could shrink by 0.8 per cent at an annual rate in the first three months of this year, down from 2.4 per cent in last year's final quarter. The Atlanta Fed's tracker is not technically a forecast but instead a running tally that is updated as economic data is released.

Typically, a recession occurs when some short of shock hits the economy, such as the pandemic in 2020, or the bursting of the housing bubble in 2007. It's not yet clear that tariffs will have a large enough impact to knock the economy into reverse. But economists at Wells Fargo, in a note on Friday, calculated that the average US tariff would jump tenfold to about 23 per cent when all the duties are in place, the highest since 1908.

Such a shift "practically overnight will throw sand in the gears of global supply chains in ways that we have not seen since the pandemic and perhaps since World War II," Shannon Grein, an economist at Wells Fargo, wrote.

On Sunday, Trump told reporters that "sometimes you have to take medicine to fix something." Yet Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on the same day said "there doesn't have to be a recession" and that the administration is focused on "building the long-term economic fundamentals for prosperity."

The clearest signal would be a steady rise in job losses and a surge in unemployment. The government's weekly report on the number of people seeking unemployment benefits, which is released every Thursday, is being closely watched for signs of rising layoffs. So far, applications for aid remain quite low by historical standards.

Torsten Slok, chief economist for Apollo, an asset management firm, is watching a range of real-time data and sees some signs the economy is weakening. The number of people filing for bankruptcy has risen, while visits to Las Vegas have declined a bit. Weekly visits to movie theatres this year are below their levels in recent years, he said.

The Trump administration is plowing ahead with widespread job cuts in federal agencies, such as the Department of Health and Human Services, and says it will cut government spending. Both could weigh on the economy, at least in the short run.

And even if some of the tariffs imposed 2 April are pulled back or reduced, the uncertainty surrounding the Trump administration's trade policies are likely to discourage spending by businesses or consumers. *—PTI*

SALAR

Nations considering global tax on shipping emissions

Nations are trying to reach an agreement to charge commercial vessels a fee for their emissions in what would effectively be the world's first global carbon tax.

The International Maritime Organisation, which regulates international shipping, set a target for the sector to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by about 2050, and committed to ensuring that fuels with zero or near-zero emissions are used more widely. Its Marine Environment Protection Committee meets Monday through Friday in London.

The committee, comprised of IMO member states, is working to approve proposed new global regulations to put a price on maritime greenhouse gas emissions and to set a marine fuel standard to phase in cleaner fuels. The measures are more than climate aspirations – they will become mandatory for ships operating globally, said IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, who thinks the industry must do more to cut carbon pollution. The committee will "set the course for a net-zero future for the maritime sector," he told The Associated Press(AP).

The future of clean shipping hangs in the balance, said Emma Fenton, senior director for climate diplomacy at a UK-based climate change nonprofit, Opportunity Green. Fenton said a high price, simple flat-rate levy on shipping's greenhouse gas emissions is the only way to decarbonize the industry equitably.

"If an agreement is reached, it would represent a huge moment of solidarity in the fight to tackle climate change," Fenton said. "For the first time, we will have, hopefully, an effective global framework tackling this international issue. Most emissions are tackled domestically."

Emissions from shipping have increased over the last decade — to about 3 per cent of the global total according to the UN — as vessels have gotten much bigger, delivering more cargo per trip and using immense amounts of fuel oil. Maritime nations agreed in 2023 to slash emissions from the shipping industry, though several experts and nations were critical of the deal since it did not set 2050 as a hard date. IMO is now in the process of adopting regulations to achieve the goals agreed to in 2023.

A simple climate levy paired with a green fuel standard would help narrow the price gap between fossil fuels and green fuels, such as hydrogen, methanol and ammonia, according to the Global Maritime Forum, a nonprofit that works closely with the industry.

Shipping relies heavily on fossil fuels and the sector won't transition off those on its own, said Jesse Fahnestock, who leads the forum's decarbonization work. And it will take time to build up a supply of e-fuels based on renewable electricity so investments need to happen now, he added.

Most ships today run on heavy fuel oil, releasing carbon dioxide and other pollutants as it's burned. Dominguez has said that major decarbonizing requires an overhaul of shipping fuel.

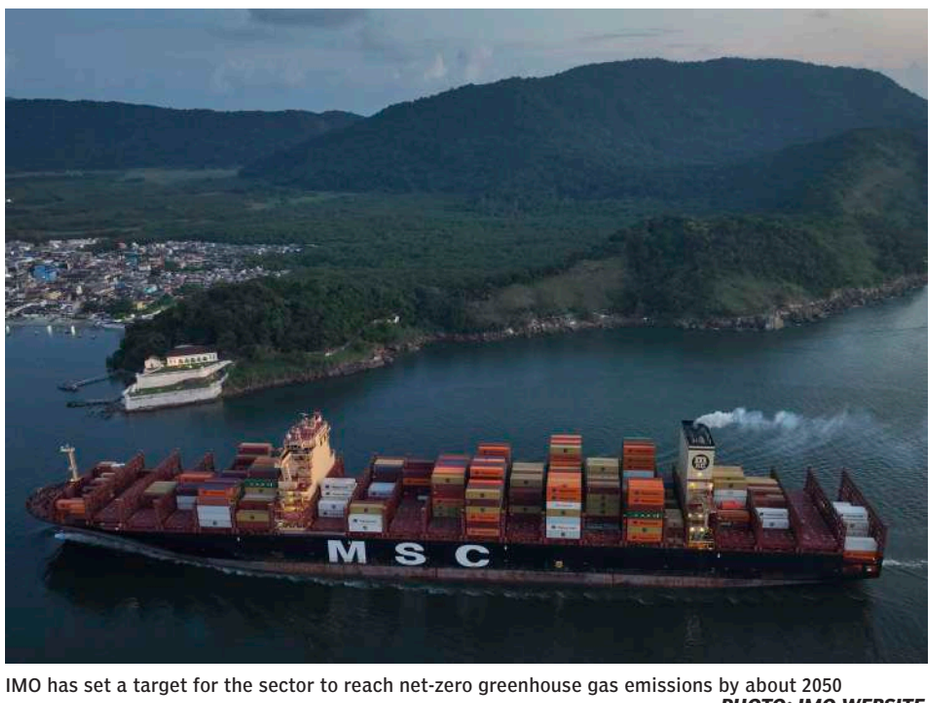
The Clean Shipping Coalition is calling on governments to commit to a high price on all ship emissions and a strong fuel standard. The alliance of environmental non-profits is also urging countries to revise the IMO's tool for measuring a ship's carbon intensity, to quantify and raise their efficiency transparently and drive down the amount of fuel burned long-term.

Led by Pacific island nations, whose very existence is threatened by climate change, more than 60 countries support a flat levy per metric ton of emissions to reach net zero in a fair way. The shipping industry supports a fee, too. The International Chamber of Shipping represents over 80 per cent of the world's merchant fleet. Its secretary general, Guy Platten, said a pricing mechanism for maritime emissions is a pragmatic solution and the most effective way to incentivise a rapid energy transition in shipping.

Some countries, notably China, Brazil, Saudi Arabia and South Africa, want a credit trading model instead of a fixed levy, where ships get credits for staying under their emissions target and ships purchase credits if they go over. Other countries want a compromise between the two models.

Some fear that anything short of a universal levy would jeopardise climate goals and allow wealthier ship owners to buy compliance while continuing to pollute.

Ambassador Albon Ishoda, Marshall Islands' special envoy for maritime decarbonization, said IMO's climate targets are "meaningless" without the levy. Revenue from a levy could be used to help developing countries transition to greener shipping, so they aren't left behind with dirty fuels and old ships. *—PTI*



IMO has set a target for the sector to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by about 2050
PHOTO: IMO WEBSITE

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Faced with huge tariffs, South Africa plans to increase trade with India

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa with Prime Minister Narendra Modi ***PHOTO: PTI***

South Africa is looking at expanding its trade with India and China as it faces the prospect of a 30 per cent tariff imposed on it by US President Donald Trump, Deputy President Paul Mashatile said on Monday.

"The geopolitics at the moment really requires that we should be engaging other nations as well. We know that we are one of the US's biggest trading partners, but there is nothing that says that we should not intensify our trade relations with India, China and other countries," Mashatile told a gathering of business and community leaders.

He was speaking at the inaugural breakfast event hosted by the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation, named after the late Indian-origin freedom activist who served one less year than the 27 of Nelson Mandela as a political prisoner of the minority white apartheid government.

Mashatile also commented on South Africa's G20 presidency this year as an opportunity to benefit the entire continent.

"Solidarity for us is very important. We should use the G20 to make sure that after our presidency, we can look back and say we were able to give not only to South Africa but to the continent.

"I'm hoping that with the G20, we will be able to work with other countries to ensure that we also strengthen solidarity and focus on economic development, not only of South Africa but the continent," he said.

Mashatile said there was also opportunity to make sure that the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement is implemented.

"So, we are bringing that on board as well (since) Africa itself as a continent is a big market. We must begin to look as a country to where else can we begin to improve trade relations, people to-people relations, but also to become self-reliant as a country," Mashatile said as he shared that the European Union had visited a fortnight ago and expressed a desire to work more with South Africa.

The deputy president said South Africa would not impose any retaliatory tariffs after Trump announced 30 per cent tariffs on South Africa and earlier stopped all aid to the country, but would continue to engage with the US government.

This was despite strained relations between the two countries over the issue of South Africa charging Israel with genocide at the International Criminal Court over its war on Gaza and the US declaring South Africa's Ambassador Ebrahim Rasool persona non grata after he made remarks about Trump in a public debate.

"President Ramaphosa said let's not rush, let's engage; let's use our diplomatic channels to engage with the US administration," Mashatile said, conceding that that trade wars would not benefit anyone, as consumers would be the ultimate victims.

Reacting to a question on whether South Africa did not need a Department of Government Efficiency, such as the one headed by billionaire Elon Musk under Donald Trump's presidency, Mashatile said there was a similar effort in place in the local presidency to address government wastage.

"It is true that in some areas of government we do find wastage. In some areas you find that departments are given money that they don't spend on time, including local government, so Operation Vulindlela is meant to do the exact thing that Musk is trying to do in the US," Mashatile said.

"We are looking at economic reforms, cutting red tape and looking at areas where there is wastage," Mashatile said, adding that this structure reports directly to President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Mashatile also lauded the lifelong commitment of Kathrada to bring democracy to the majority Black community in South Africa.

"Even when he came back from prison after many years, he did not go and stay home and say I'm retired. He went back into the trenches, making sure that our people should finally be free and be able to transform their lives and ensure that we have a better life," he said.

Mashatile said the foundation needed to continue the conversations about Kathrada's legacy of commitment to setting goals for non-racialism, non-sexism and gender equality. *—PTI*

■ "The geopolitics at the moment really requires that we should be engaging other nations as well. We know that we are one of the US's biggest trading partners, but there is nothing that says that we should not intensify our trade relations with India, China and other countries," Mashatile told

■ The deputy president said South Africa would not impose any retaliatory tariffs after Trump announced 30 per cent tariffs on South Africa and earlier stopped all aid to the country.

PHOTO: X

US sacks only woman on NATO military panel

WASHINGTON, 8 APRIL

The Trump administration has dismissed Vice Admiral Shoshana Chatfield, the only woman serving on NATO's military committee, according to US officials. While no formal reason was provided, her support for diversity initiatives is believed to have prompted her removal. Chatfield, a decorated Navy helicopter pilot and Bronze Star recipient, was informed by Admiral Christopher Grady that the administration sought "a different direction." The decision reportedly came from Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, though it remains unclear if former President Trump was directly involved. She is the third senior female officer removed since Trump's return to office, following the sackings of Admirals Lisa Franchetti and Linda Fagan. *—PTI*

Trump to deport migrants admitted via Biden era app

WASHINGTON, 8 APRIL

Migrants who entered the United States through the Biden-era CBP One mobile app have been ordered to leave the country "immediately," the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) confirmed on Monday. The app, which allowed more than 900,000 individuals to enter legally since January 2023, granted temporary stay and work rights under presidential parole authority. The DHS said revoking these paroles fulfils a promise to "secure the borders and protect national security." Termination notices were sent via email, though the exact number of affected migrants remains unclear. Recipients have been told to voluntarily self-deport using the rebranded "CBP Home" app. One message, bluntly read: "It's time for you to abandon the US." *—PTI*

Kennedy urges CDC to drop fluoride guidance

SALT LAKE CITY, 8 APRIL

US Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr. said on Monday he plans to instruct the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to stop recommending water fluoridation nationwide. He also announced a task force to examine fluoride's health effects. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is now reviewing new scientific data on fluoride risks. Though Kennedy cannot ban fluoridation, he can influence CDC guidance and work with the EPA to revise national limits. His announcement came in Salt Lake City, where he praised Utah for becoming the first US state to ban fluoride in public water. The state's new law overrides local decisions. *—PTI*

NASA astronaut, Russian crewmate sent to ISS

MOSCOW, 8 APRIL

NASA astronaut Jonny Kim and Russian cosmonauts Sergey Ryzhikov and Alexey Zubritsky launched successfully to the International Space Station (ISS) on Tuesday aboard a Russian Soyuz spacecraft. The Soyuz MS-27 lifted off on schedule from the Russia-leased Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, reaching orbit shortly after. The spacecraft is expected to dock with the ISS just over three hours later. The trio will spend approximately eight months aboard the orbital outpost. During the mission, Kim will carry out scientific investigations and technology demonstrations aimed at advancing future space exploration and delivering benefits back on Earth. Originally from Los Angeles, Kim is a US Navy lieutenant commander, trained both as a naval aviator and a flight surgeon. *—PTI*

Containers pile up at Kwai Chung Container Terminal in Hong Kong **PHOTO: PTI**

China bold as Trump vows to raise tariffs

US to levy up to 50% if China sticks to its 34%

BEIJING, 8 APRIL

Two top economies of the world traded barbs over the tariff minefield as China said on Tuesday it would "fight to the end" and take countermeasures against the United States to safeguard its own interests after President Donald Trump threatened an additional 50% tariff on Chinese.

The additional tariff threat came from Trump on Monday through his social media site Truth Social where he said, "If China does not withdraw its 34% increase above their already long term trading abuses by tomorrow, April 8th, 2025, the United States will impose ADDITIONAL Tariffs on China of 50%, effective April 9th. Additionally, all talks with China concerning their requested meetings with us will be terminated!"

If Trump makes good his threat, US tariffs on Chinese goods would reach a combined 104%. The new taxes would be on top of the 20% tariffs announced as punishment for fentanyl trafficking and his separate 34% tariffs announced last week.

China which has described the imposition of tariffs as 'unilateral bullying' described the new threat as 'mistake over a mistake'.

Xi Jinping and Donald Trump **PHOTO: X**

"The countermeasures China has taken are aimed at safeguarding its sovereignty, security and development interests, and maintaining the normal international trade order. They are completely legitimate," the ministry said. "The US threat to escalate tariffs on China is a mistake on top of a mistake and once again exposes the blackmailing nature of the US. China will never accept this. If the US insists on its own way, China will fight to the end."

Trump has described days of financial pain as necessary. "I don't mind going through it because I see a beautiful picture at the end," he said. *—PTI*

ASEAN COUNTRIES REACH OUT TO US ON TARIFFS

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 APRIL

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim says his government and others in Southeast Asia will send a delegation to Washington to discuss the tariff situation.

In a keynote speech Tuesday at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Investment Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Anwar said ASEAN leaders would try to build a consensus and present a united response to Trump's tariffs.

"We do not believe in megaphone diplomacy," Anwar said. "As part of our soft diplomacy of quiet engagement, we will be dispatching together with our colleagues in ASEAN our officials in Washington to begin the process of dialogue." *—PTI*

Trump meets Netanyahu to discuss tariff, Gaza

WASHINGTON, DUBAI, 8 APRIL

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with President Donald Trump in Washington on Monday, becoming the first foreign leader to visit Trump since he unleashed tariffs on countries around the world.

Whether Netanyahu's visit succeeds in bringing down or eliminating Israel's tariffs remains to be seen, but how it plays out could set the stage for how other world leaders try to address the new tariffs.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, Trump said US will hold direct talks with Iran starting Saturday about its nuclear program, while warning Tehran it would be in "great danger" if the talks aren't successful. He insisted Tehran can't get nuclear weapons. Iran however has said talks with US would be indirect.

"We're dealing with them directly and maybe a deal is going to be made," Trump said. Asked if he would commit to military action against Iran should his negotiators be unable to come to terms with Tehran, Trump responded that "Iran is going to be in great danger, and I hate to say it. If the talks aren't successful, I think it's going to be a very bad day for Iran," he said.

Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said on Tuesday he'll meet with US envoy Steve Witkoff in Oman for the first negotiations under the Trump administration seeking to halt Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program as tensions remain high in the Middle East. Speaking to Iranian state television from Algeria, Araghchi maintained the talks would be indirect, likely with Omani mediators shuttling between the two parties and would seek lifting of sanctions. *—PTI*

US President Donald Trump greets Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Israeli strike hits charity kitchen for Palestinians

DEIR AL-BALAH, 8 APRIL

An Israeli strike has hit next to a charity kitchen where Palestinians crowded to receive cooked meals as food supplies dwindle under Israel's month-long blockade of the Gaza Strip, killing over 30 people, mostly women and children, health officials said.

Another strike hit a media tent outside a hospital, killing 2, including a Palestinian journalist and wounding six. The Israeli military said the strike targeted Hassan Eslaiah, a Hamas militant posing as a journalist, who was among the wounded.

Six other people were killed and 10 others wounded in the blast near the charity kitchen outside Khan Younis on 7 April. Charity kitchens have been drawing bigger crowds of Palestinians as Israel cut off all food, fuel, medicine and other supplies for Gaza's over 2 million people a month back. Israel has been carrying out bombardments across Gaza to pressure Hamas to free its remaining hostages, disarm and leave the territory. *—PTI*

MICROSOFT FIRES WORKERS OPPOSING ISRAEL CONTRACT

WASHINGTON, 8 APRIL

Microsoft has fired two employees who interrupted the company's 50th anniversary celebration to protest its work supplying artificial intelligence technology to the Israeli military.

Microsoft accused one of the workers in a termination letter on 7 April of misconduct "designed to gain notoriety and cause maximum disruption to this highly anticipated event." The other worker had already announced her resignation, but she was asked her to leave five days early.

The protests began on 4 April when software engineer, Ibtihal Aboussad accused Microsoft AI CEO Mustafa Suleyman of selling weapons to the Israeli military. *—PTI*

South Korea to elect president on 3 June

SEOUL, 8 APRIL

South Korea will hold a snap presidential election 3 June to replace recently ousted President Yoon Suk Yeol, the country's acting leader Han Duck-soo announced on Tuesday.

The announcement came days after the Constitutional Court removed President Yeol from office over his ill-fated imposition of martial law in December. By law, South Korea must elect a new president within 60 days of his ouster.

Deep political polarization will shape the election into a two-way showdown between Yoon's Conservative People Power Party and its liberal rival, Democratic Party.

An uphill battle awaits the People Power Party as it struggles to restore public confidence and heal severe internal divisions left by Yoon's martial law stunt.

The focus is on whether conservatives can regroup and field a strong candidate Democratic Party candidate, Lee Jae-myung, who observers say is the clear front-runner.

The primaries to select presidential candidates is expected in the coming weeks.

The Democratic Party candidate is expected to be Lee, who led the party through a crisis involving standoff between troops and its members at the National Assembly, vote to lift martial law and the later vote to impeach the president.

About 10 politicians from the People Power Party are expected to throw their hats in for the party's primary, including Minister Kim Moon Soo, Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon, Daegu Mayor Hong Joon-pyo, former party leader Han Dong-hoon and senior party lawmaker AhnCheol-soo. *—PTI*

Nepal party holds rally seeking reinstatement of monarchy

KATHMANDU, 8 APRIL

The pro-monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) staged a large-scale protest rally on Tuesday in Kathmandu, calling for the reinstatement of the monarchy and the re-establishment of Nepal as a Hindu state.

Thousands of RPP supporters, including party leaders, workers, and cadres, took to the streets, waving national flags and carrying portraits of former King Gyanendra Shah. The rally, led by party chairman Rajendra Lingden, commenced at Balkhu on the outskirts of the capital.

The demonstrators chanted slogans such as "Let's change the system to change the situation", "Reinstate the monarchy to save the nation", and "Declare Nepal a Hindu state". The protest was held under tight security, with over 2,000 police personnel deployed to prevent any disturbances.

Thousands of RPP supporters took to Kathmandu streets, waving national flags and carrying portraits of former King Gyanendra Shah **PHOTO: X**

Alongside Lingden, senior leaders including Pashupati Shumsher Rana and Prakash Chandra Lohani addressed the rally, calling for the immediate release of party members detained during earlier pro-monarchy demonstrations on 28 March. *—PTI*

Royal court hears Harry's appeal on police protection

LONDON, 8 APRIL

Prince Harry has taken his legal battle over police protection in the UK to the Court of Appeal, seeking to overturn a ruling that upheld the withdrawal of his publicly funded security.

The Duke of Sussex lost his government-provided protection in 2020 after stepping down as a working royal and relocating to the United States. He arrived at the Court of Appeal in London on Tuesday to challenge a previous High Court judgment that upheld the decision to provide "bespoke" security on an as-needed basis.

Harry, 40, argues that the current arrangement leaves him and his family at risk when visiting Britain. *—PTI*

SCHOOLS CLOSED

There were no reports of injuries or damage from Mount Kanlaon's eruption after that lasted over an hour **PHOTO: X**

Philippine volcano spews ash plume into the sky

MANILA, 8 APRIL

A restive Philippine volcano briefly erupted on Tuesday on Negros Island, sending a four kilometer of plume of ash and debris into the sky and forcing authorities to shut schools in four villages.

There were no reports of injuries or damage from Mount Kanlaon's eruption after that lasted over an hour and scattered ash in four farming villages southwest of the volcano, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said. *—PTI*

KENNEDY UNFAZED

Vaccine scare causes measles outbreak in US

WASHINGTON, 6 APRIL

An utterly preventable outbreak of measles threatens West Texas which has already spread to New Mexico, Oklahoma and Kansas sickening nearly 570 people. Experts and local health officials expect the outbreak to go on for several more months if not a year.

In West Texas, the vast majority of cases are in unvaccinated people and children younger than 17. A second school-aged child West Texas is the third unvaccinated person to die of measles-related illness. As the outbreak continues to swell, a team from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention is on the ground in Texas assisting with outbreak response. And nationwide, the US has more than double the number of measles cases it saw in all of 2024.

Nearly all cases are in the unvaccinated segment **PHOTO: X**

- A team from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention is in Texas assisting with outbreak response. And nationwide, the US has double the number of measles cases it saw in all of 2024

Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr., a longtime anti-vaccine activist, has delivered a tepid message on the importance of vaccination against measles, saying it should be encouraged while also sowing doubt in the vaccine's safety. The measles, mumps and rubella vaccine has been used safely for more than 60 years and is 97 per cent effective against measles after two doses.

With several states facing outbreaks of the vaccine-preventable disease, some worry that measles may cost the US its status as having eliminated it. Measles is a respiratory virus that can survive in the air for up to two hours. Up to 9 out of 10 people who are susceptible will get the virus if exposed, according to the CDC. The first shot is recommended for children ages 12 to 15 months, and the second for ages four to six years. *—PTI*

INDIAN-ORIGIN MAN CHARGED WITH SEXUAL ASSAULT ABOARD US FLIGHT

NEW YORK, 8 APRIL

Bhaveshkumar Dahyabhai Shukla, a 36-year-old man of Indian origin, has been charged with sexually assaulting a fellow passenger on an American Airlines flight from Bozeman, Montana, to Dallas, Texas. The incident occurred on 26 January, 2025, and Shukla has been indicted on one count of abusive sexual contact within the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States.

According to the indictment, Shukla allegedly engaged in unwanted sexual contact with another passenger without their consent during the flight. The victim's husband reported the incident to the FBI's National Threat Operations Center after receiving a text message from his wife about the assault. The investigation was conducted jointly by the FBI, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport Police.

If convicted, Shukla faces two years' imprisonment, a fine of up to USD 250,000, and a minimum of five years under supervised release. He is due to appear in court for arraignment on 17 April, 2025. The case is being prosecuted by the US Attorney's Office. *—PTI*

After tariff mayhem, mkt rises by 1,089 pts

Investors become richer by Rs 7.32 L cr as markets recover

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Investors' wealth swelled by Rs 7.32 lakh crore on Tuesday as equity markets staged a strong comeback after crumbling in the previous trade.

Snapping its three-day decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,089.18 points or 1.49 per cent to settle at 74,227.08. During the day, it climbed 1,721.49 points or 2.35 per cent to 74,859.39.

Thanks to the positive trend in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged Rs 7,32,042.69 crore to Rs 3,96,57,703.44 crore.

"Markets opened sharply higher following gains in Asia in the morning after another highly volatile overnight session in the US. After a brutal sell-off, markets are staging a cautious relief rally on hopes for positive news, in terms of concessions, ahead of deadline for reciprocal tariffs. On the domestic front, we saw strong DII (Domestic Institutional Investors) buying cushioning the market fall yesterday," Satish Chandra Aluri, Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

On Monday, the market cap

PHOTO: PTI

of BSE-listed firms declined sharply by Rs 14,09,225.71 crore to Rs 3,89,25,660.75 crore in a single day amid a global market meltdown due to recession fears.

All Sensex firms, except Power Grid, ended in the positive territory.

Titan, Bajaj Finance, State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finserv, Axis Bank, Zomato and Asian Paints were the biggest gainers.

World markets also staged a rebound after Monday's collapse.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 2.18 per cent and midcap index surged 1.87 per cent.

All BSE sectoral indices ended higher.

As many as 3,093 stocks advanced while 871 declined and 119 remained unchanged on the BSE. —*PTIS*

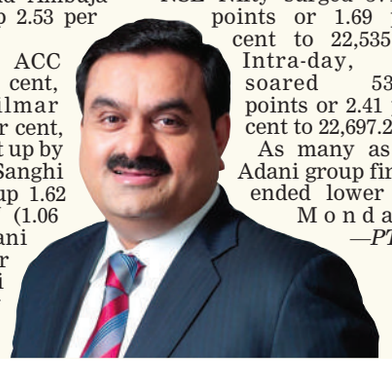
Adani Group stocks shake off loss, make a bounce back

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

All 11 listed Adani group firms ended higher on Tuesday, bouncing back from the previous day's decline, amid a recovery in the equity market.

Shares of Adani Enterprises jumped 3.27 per cent, Adani Total Gas climbed 3.27 per cent, Adani Energy Solutions rallied 3.23 per cent and Ambuja Cements shot up 2.53 per cent on the BSE.

The stock of ACC gained 2.32 per cent, Adani Wilmar advanced 2.24 per cent, Adani Ports went up by 1.72 per cent, Sanghi Industries was up 1.62 per cent, NDTV (1.06 per cent), Adani Power (0.54 per cent) and Adani Green Energy (0.30 per cent).



The combined market valuation of all the 11 firms stood at Rs 12,18,530 crore.

Stock markets rebounded sharply on Tuesday, a day after facing their worst drubbing in 10 months.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,089.18 points or 1.49 per cent to settle at 74,227.08 with 29 of its components ending in the green.

NSE Nifty surged 374.25 points or 1.69 per cent to 22,535.85. Intra-day, it soared 535.6 points or 2.41 per cent to 22,697.20.

As many as 10 Adani group firms ended lower on Monday. —*PTI*

World markets gyrate under tariffs uncertainty

BANGKOK, 8 APRIL

Asian markets opened higher on Tuesday, with Japan's Nikkei 225 share benchmark up 5.5 per cent after it fell nearly eight per cent a day earlier.

The rebound followed a wild day on Wall Street as US stocks careened after President Donald Trump threatened to crank his double-digit tariffs higher.

The Nikkei 225 had jumped to 32,819.08 a half-hour after the market in Tokyo opened.

South Korea's Kospi gained two per cent and markets in New Zealand and Australia also were higher.

Asian markets plunged on Monday, with stocks in Hong Kong diving 13.2 per cent for their worst day since 1997, during the Asian financial crisis.

The S&P 500 ended down 0.2 per cent on Monday as battered financial markets watched to see what Trump will do next in his trade war. If other countries agree to trade deals, he could lower his tariffs and avoid a possible recession. But if he sticks with tariffs for the long haul, stock prices may fall further.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 349 points, or 0.9 per cent, and the Nasdaq composite edged up by 0.1 per cent. —*PTI*

Gold falls by ₹200 to ₹91,250 per 10g

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Gold prices fell by Rs 200 to Rs 91,250 per 10g in the national capital on Tuesday amid subdued demand in the local markets, according to All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 91,450 per 10g on Monday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity dipped Rs 200 to Rs 90,800 per 10g. It had concluded at Rs 91,000 per 10g in the previous market close. Silver prices rebounded after falling for the past five sessions and rose by Rs 200 to Rs 92,700 per kg against the previous close of Rs 92,500 per kg. Meanwhile, spot gold increased 0.82 per cent to USD 3,007.60 per ounce in the overseas markets. —*PTI*

Rupee sinks by 50p to settle at 86.26 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 8 APRIL

Declining for the third straight session, the rupee tumbled 50 paise to settle at 86.26 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, logging the maximum single-day loss in nearly three months amid a looming global trade war stoking fears of economic meltdown. According to forex traders, some recovery in crude oil prices and continued foreign capital outflows also dented sentiments. The global markets have been facing extreme volatility following a fresh threat by the US administration to impose a punitive 50 per cent tariff against China's retaliatory 34 per cent import levies on American products, they added. The unit ended at 86.26 (provisional), registering a loss of 50 paise from its previous closing level. —*PTI*

Tata Steel named Sustainability Champion

JAMSHEDPUR, 8 APRIL

Tata Steel has been recognised as a Steel Sustainability Champion 2025 by World Steel Association (Worldsteel), a company statement said on Tuesday. The Special General Meeting (SGM) of the Board of Members of Worldsteel held on Tuesday in Sydney, Australia announced the names of 2025 Steel Sustainability Champions, it said. To qualify as a sustainability champion, companies must meet stringent criteria including signing the Worldsteel Sustainability Charter and demonstrating commitments to environmental responsibility, social impact, and governance excellence. The evaluation process considers key sustainability indicators such as material efficiency, environmental management systems, lost time injury frequency rate, employee training, investments in innovative processes and products, and economic value distribution. Additionally, companies must provide Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) data to worldsteel's data collection programme. —*PTI*

Jio Finance starts digital Loan Against Securities

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Jio Finance Limited (JFL), the NBFC arm of Jio Financial Services Limited, on Tuesday said it has introduced fully digital Loan Against Securities (LAS) for its customers with interest rate starting at 9.99 per cent. The LAS offering from JFL is a secured lending product that allows customers to leverage their investments, such as shares and mutual funds, to avail loans at competitive interest rates, all within just ten minutes through a completely digital process, the company said in a statement. Available through the JioFinance app, a one-stop destination for seamless and digital-first financial services, LAS – comprising Loan Against Shares and Loan Against Mutual Funds – is designed to meet the financial needs of customers, without requiring them to sell their securities, it said. —*PTI*

AMID UNCERTAINTY

India & EU to negotiate FTA deal in phases: Sources

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

In light of growing uncertainties in global trade, India and the European Union (EU) are contemplating a phased approach to their free trade agreement (FTA) discussions. An official source revealed that this strategy, which has been effectively used in negotiations with Australia, would allow both parties to finalise simpler issues first while deferring more complex topics for later.

Following the conclusion of the tenth round of FTA negotiations in Brussels last month, the next round is anticipated to take place in May. Positive momentum is reportedly building after a recent visit from European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and senior EU officials.

Trade experts assert that fostering stronger economic relations between India and the EU is essential, particularly given the substantial tariffs introduced by the US. Negotiations, which resumed in June 2022 after an eight-year hiatus, cover 23 policy

PHOTO: X

areas including trade in goods and services, investment, and intellectual property rights.

In 2023-24, bilateral trade in goods between India and the EU reached USD 137.41 billion, with India exporting goods worth USD 75.92 billion to the EU, making it India's largest trading partner. The agreement aims to further enhance bilateral trade and investment.

Additionally, the implementation of the free trade agreement between India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is on track, with parliaments approving the deal. A referendum in Switzerland is expected for final ratification as the agreement aims for implementation by the year's end.—*PTI*

Firms in FDI ban sector can issue bonus shares

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Indian government has clarified that companies operating in sectors where Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is prohibited can issue bonus shares to their existing foreign shareholders, provided that the shareholding pattern remains unchanged.

The announcement was made by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

According to the DPIIT's clarification, while issuing bonus shares to foreign investors in restricted sectors, firms must adhere to all relevant regulations and guidelines.

The issuance is allowed as long as the proportion of ownership by non-resident shareholders does not change.

FDI is permitted through the automatic route in most sectors, but requires government approval in certain fields such as telecommunications, media, and pharmaceuticals.

Some sensitive sectors, including lottery and tobacco manufacturing, outright ban foreign investment.

This change is perceived as a significant step to facilitate corporate actions and bolster investor confidence in India's growing economic landscape. —*PTI*

SAYS GOLDMAN SACHS

'RBI likely to cut repo rate to 6% amid cooling inflation'

NEW DELHI8 APRIL

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) repo rate is expected to drop by 25 basis points (bps) to six per cent after the ongoing Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, according to Goldman Sachs.

The repo rate is expected to be 5.50 per cent by year-end.

Several factors have created a favorable environment for the RBI to ease the policy rates.

The domestic economic activity showed signs of moderation in the first quarter.

Inflation is expected to remain benign, with financial services firm estimating March's Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation at 3.7 per cent.

A sharp drop in Brent crude oil prices and the US Dollar Index (DXY) following President Trump's recent tariff announcements have also contributed to the RBI's likely decision to cut.

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) repo rate is expected to drop by 25 basis points PHOTO: PTI

The banking system's liquidity surplus of around Rs 1.7, has been a result of RBI's persistent liquidity injections, including an Rs 800 billion open market operation purchase announced last week.

"With the inter-bank overnight rates now trading below the repo rate, the monetary policy stance (currently neutral) in this policy meeting is less relevant from the viewpoint of forward guidance on liquidity," the report said.

Goldman Sachs also revised its economic growth forecasts for India.

It downgraded its 2025 real GDP growth forecast by 30bps to 6.1 per cent year-on-year, citing the US tariff hikes and a slowdown in services exports. —*ANI*

10 states, 1 UT to have one Regional Rural Bank from 1 May

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) has announced the amalgamation of 26 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) under the 'One State One RRB' initiative, as stated by the Ministry of Finance.

This marks the fourth phase of RRB consolidation, following previous efforts that aimed to enhance efficiency.

This latest amalgamation involves RRBs across 10 states and one union territory, focusing on improving scale efficiency and rationalising costs.

Currently, 43 RRBs operate within 26 states and two union territories; post-amalgamation, this will be reduced to 28 RRBs with over 22,000 branch-

Regional Rural Bank PHOTO: PTI

es serving 700 districts.

Approximately 92 per cent of these branches are located in the rural or semi-urban areas, fulfilling their mandate of promoting rural development.

Previous phases of the RRB amalgamation successfully reduced their numbers from 196 to 82, then 82 to 56, and subsequently from 56 to 43.

The official gazette notification confirms that, effective immediately, the assets and responsibilities of the transferring banks will pass to the receiving RRBs. —*ANI*

Regulatory easing to help India's credit growth

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Rating agency Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency (ICRA) expects India's credit growth to expand at 10.8 per cent in 2025-26.

The repo rate cut, deferment of proposed changes in the liquidity coverage ratio framework and additional provisions on infra projects, along with the roll-back of increased risk weights on lending to unsecured consumer credit and non-banking financial companies are some of the enabling.

The durable liquidity infusion by the Reserve Bank of India through open market operations by way of purchases of government bonds and forex swaps with banks, would aid the liquidity and faster transmission of the ongoing cut in policy rates.

The banking sector has been facing the challenge of raising deposits at competitive pricing, especially the retail deposits. —*ANI*

Swiggy Instamart launches 'Maxxsaver'

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Quick commerce platform SwiggyInstamart on Tuesday launched 'Maxxsaver', an in-app feature whereby users will be automatically enrolled and eligible for savings of up to Rs 500 after a certain order value at check-out.

The feature is aimed at making everyday shopping more affordable and rewarding, the company said.

Maxxsaver aims to transform Swiggy Instamart into most affordable and convenient quick commerce destination. This feature comes on lines of Zepto's Super-Saver, which enhances online shopping experience. —*PTI*

Tata Motors global wholesales slip by 3% in Q4

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Tata Motors on Tuesday reported a 3 per cent decline in its group global wholesales, including Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), at 3,66,177 units in the fourth quarter of 2024-25 as compared to the year-ago period.

Global wholesales of Tata Motors passenger vehicles, including electric vehicles, in Q4 FY25 were at 1,46,999 units, lower by six per cent against Q4 FY24, the company said in a statement. British arm JLR clocked 1,11,413 units in the fourth quarter, up one per cent from the same period a year ago. Jaguar wholesales during the quarter were 7,070 units, while Land Rover wholesales stood at 1,04,343 units, it added. Tata Motors said its commercial vehicles and Tata Daewoo range sales were at 1,07,765 units in Q4 FY25, lower by three per cent over Q4 FY24. —*PTI*

UP BY 13%

Avg CEO pay in India stands at Rs 10 cr: Report

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

The median compensation for non-promoter or professional CEOs in India now stands at Rs 10 crore, up 13 per cent over the previous year, according to the Deloitte India Executive Performance and Rewards Survey 2025.

Only 40 per cent of the total CEO compensation components is fixed and the remaining 60 per cent is at risk. Short-term incentives or annual bonuses comprise 25 per cent of total CEO compensation and long-term incentives constitute the balance of 35 per cent.

According to survey, pay for other CXOs like COOs, CFOs, CHROs, CMOs and CSOs over the last year saw an increase, ranging between seven to 11 per cent.

Only 40 per cent of the total CEO compensation components is fixed PHOTO: PTI

Approximately 60 per cent of total CXO pay is fixed while the remaining is equally split between short-term and long-term incentives. COOs and CFOs continue to be the highest-paid executive positions after the CEO, with a total compensation nearing Rs 4 crore.

The sixth edition of Deloitte India Executive Performance and Rewards Survey was launched in September 2024 as an India-specific B2B survey. More than 400 organisations participated in the survey, and it did not include any public sector companies, Deloitte India said.

Anandorup Ghose, Partner, Deloitte India, said, "CXO compensation continues to rise in India with this talent pool remaining restricted and consequently in high demand. We are yet to observe any negative impact of the ongoing correction in the equity markets on CXO compensation". —*PTI*

India is now the 3rd largest generator of wind power

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

India became the world's third-largest producer of electricity from wind and solar energy in 2024, overtaking Germany, to according to a new report published on Tuesday.

The sixth edition of global energy think tank Ember's Global Electricity Review said wind and solar together generated 15 per cent of global electricity last year. India's share stood at 10 per cent.

The report said low-carbon sources, including renewables and nuclear power, together provided 40.9 per cent of the world's electricity in 2024. This is the first time the 40 per cent mark has been crossed since the 1940s.

In India, clean sources accounted for 22 per cent of the electricity generation. Hydropower contributed the most at 8 per cent, while wind and solar together accounted for 10 per cent.Globally, renewables led the growth in clean electricity, adding a record 858 terawatt hours in 2024 -- 49 per cent more than the previous record in 2022.

In just three years, global solar power generation doubled to 6.9 per cent of the electricity mix. —*ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

Patidar fined ₹ 12 lakh for team's slow over-rate

MUMBAI, 8 APRIL

Royal Challengers Bengaluru captain Rajat Patidar was fined Rs 12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their IPL match against Mumbai Indians here. RCB beat MI by 12 runs, and Patidar contributed a stylish 32-ball 64 to his side's eventual total of 221 for five. MI were then restricted to 209 for nine. "As this was his team's first offence of the season under Article 2.2 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which pertains to minimum over-rate offences, Patidar was fined Rs 12 lakh," stated an IPL media release. The Bengaluru team, which is currently third on the table with six points, will face Delhi Capitals at home in their fifth match of the season at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on 10 April.—*PTI*

Top contenders set to compete in World 10K in B'luru

BENGALURU, 8 APRIL

Uganda's Olympian Joshua Cheptegei, promising Kenyans Cintia Chepngeno and Gladys Mong'are, the reigning African champion in the 10,000m, are some of the prominent global runners who will grace this year's TCS World 10K to be held here in Bengaluru on 27 April. In the men's section, Cheptegei, who is returning to the event for the first time since 2014, will be challenged by compatriot Stephen Kissa, a bronze medallist in the 2020 Delhi Half-Marathon. Kenya's Langat, who clocked 26:55 in Valencia earlier this year, may pull a surprise if conditions suit him.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Harmanpreet returns to lead India women's team

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Star batter Harmanpreet Kaur returned as India women's team captain for the ODI tri-series in Sri Lanka starting later this month after she was rested for the home series against Ireland in January. The BCCI women's selection committee picked a 15-member squad with Smriti Mandhana as Harmanpreet's deputy for the 27 April to 11 May tournament, which will also involve South Africa besides hosts Sri Lanka. India will face SL in the tournament opener on 27 April. The teams will play four matches each in the double round-robin league event.—*PTI*

Indian wushu player Mukesh clinches 75kg gold

JIANGYIN, 8 APRIL

Indian wushu player Mukesh Choudhary clinched the 75kg gold while five others moved to the finals of the 10th Sanda World Cup here. The six-member Indian contingent has demonstrated remarkable skill and determination against some of the world's best fighters in the tournament thus far. The highlight of India's campaign so far has been Choudhary, who secured a gold medal in the 75 kg category after an impressive victory over his French opponent in the final. In the 48 kg category, Kushal continued India's winning streak by defeating his opponent from Yemen and advancing to the final.—*PTI*

Marsh, Pooran shine with bat as LSG beat KKR by 4 runs

Kolkata bowlers struggled to apply the brakes

KOLKATA, 8 APRIL

Nicholas Pooran and Mitchell Marsh's awe-inspiring half-centuries powered Lucknow Super Giants to an exciting four-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders in a high-scoring contest in the Indian Premier League at the Eden Gardens here on Tuesday.

Put in, LSG piled a massive 238 for three before restricting KKR to 234 for seven for its third victory of IPL 2025.

LSG openers Marsh (81, 48b, 6x4, 5x6) and Aiden Markram (47, 28b, 4x4, 2x6), mixed watchfulness with smart shot selection, choosing erratic Aussie left-arm pacer Spencer Johnson for special treatment, to build a solid 99-run partnership. Harshit Rana castled Markram, who hit two spectacular sixes over mid-wicket and third-man, in the 11th over.

Marsh then formed a rapid 30-ball 71-run stand with Pooran. The clinical Marsh clubbed some lusty sixes while showing his flair on the leg-side before displaying his range on the off. He adjusted well to the slow pitch to score his fourth half-century this season before being caught at backward point.

As KKR bowlers struggled to apply the brakes, an effortless Pooran unleashed his breath-taking pyrotechnics. The brutal southpaw ruled the offside before plundering runs on the leg-side. Orange cap holder Pooran (87 n.o., 36b, 7x4, 8x6) achieved his best IPL score as LSG, which collected 68 in the last four, bulldozed to its second highest total.

Despite losing Quinton de Kock early, KKR raced to 90 in the Powerplay thanks to a brisk 54-run partnership between Sunil Narine and captain Ajinkya Rahane.

While Narine picked his spots with ease, a classy Rahane (61, 35b, 8x4, 2x6) accelerated with his exquisite placement and array of proper strokes. With his deputy Venkatesh Iyer (45, 29b, 6x4, 1x6), Rahane added a crucial 40-ball 71.

Even after Rahane's departure, claimed by Shardul Thakur after the latter bowled five consecutive wides in the 13th over, a never-say-die KKR fought on. Rinku Singh's gutsy show provided the thrill, but not a win.

Brief scores: LSG 238/3 in 20 overs (Nicholas Pooran 87 not out, Mitchell Marsh 81; Harshit Rana 2/51)

KKR 234/7 in 20 overs (Ajinkya Rahane 61, Venkatesh Iyer 45, Rinku Singh 38 not out; Shardul Thakur 2/52) —*PTI*

Lucknow Super Giants' batters Nicholas Pooran and David Miller walk off the field at the end of Lucknow's innings PHOTO: PTI

Jayawardene rules out making too many changes

Mumbai Indians have lost four of their five matches so far in the Indian Premier League, but head coach Mahela Jayawardene has ruled out making too many changes in the playing eleven, saying he would back the senior players to come good. MI lost by 12 runs against Royal Challengers Bengaluru here on Monday. In the process, RCB snapped their six-match winless streak at the Wankhede Stadium. While Jasprit Bumrah was tidy in his comeback spell, former skipper Rohit Sharma (17) flopped again, and even Suryakumar Yadav struggled during his 26-ball knock for 28 runs in a stiff chase.

> **Constant shifting through the teams "was challenging" and delayed his blooming as a cricketer in the Indian Premier League**
>
>
>
> -Devdutt Padikkal, Young batter Rajasthan Royals

> **Jasprit Bumrah is in "good nick" following a three-month-long injury lay-off and Mumbai Indians want to ease him into competition mode**
>
>
>
> -Mahela Jayawardene, head coach Mumbai Indians

LSG VS SRH

HEAD TO HEAD	
PLAYED:	6
GT Won:	5
RR Won:	1

LSG vs SRH Match starts at **7.30 pm IST**

PHOTO: PTI

GT, RR look to iron out chinks in bowling in crucial clash

AHMEDABAD, 8 APRIL

Gujarat Titans and Rajasthan Royals will hope that their stretched-to-the-hilt bowling units will find their range on an Ahmedabad flatbed in an IPL match that holds a lot of significance to their progress in the league.

The Titans now have six points, and a win will keep them in the top echelons of the points chart, while the Royals, who now have four points, will need the win to wriggle free from the mid-table tussle.

The GT have scored three wins on the trot, and RR two in successive matches to be placed where they are now in the points table, but that mini-streak hides a rather underwhelming bowling effort.

The Gujarat outfit is riding on individual brilliance by pacer Mohammed Siraj and spinner R Sai Kishore.

But the form of ace spinner Rashid Khan and experienced quick Ishant Sharma is not encouraging even when they operated at the more helpful tracks at Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

Rashid, an accomplished T20 master, has taken just a wicket from four matches while conceding more than 10 runs an over.

It's easily the worst start the Afghan had experienced in any of his previous IPL seasons.

Ishant is a co-sailor in that ship of turmoil, bagging just a solitary wicket in three matches while leaking 12 runs an over.

Unfortunately, the GT has no ready back-up available as pacers such as Arshad Khan or Fazalhaq Farooqi have not really stepped up. —*PTI*

Hockey India deploys additional support staff

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Hockey India has sent additional support staff, including a physiotherapist and a masseuse, to the ongoing Senior Men's National Championship in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, to provide medical attention and recovery support to the players.

This year's championship features an impressive array of 31 Indian men's hockey team players such as Hardik Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Krishan B Pathak, Abhishek, Amit Rohidas, Sumit, Gurjant Singh and Sanjay.

Recognising the high-intensity nature of the tournament and the workload on the Indian team players, Hockey India's move was meant to ensure the well-being of the players.

Indian men's hockey team chief coach Craig Fulton emphasised the importance of this initiative.

"Most local teams don't have dedicated physios or medical staff, but our national players are accustomed to a professional setup. The goal here is to prevent injuries and ensure our players can perform at their best," Fulton said in the release. —*PTI*

BADMINTON ASIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Kapila-Crasto keep India's hopes alive in mixed doubles

NINGBO, 8 APRIL

The Indian mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto battled hard to beat Hoo Pang Ron and Su Yin Cheng of Malaysia to enter the pre-quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Championships here on Tuesday.

The Indian pair fought for 51 minutes to get the better of their Malaysian counterparts 15-21 21-12 21-11 in the first round match.

Crasto and Kapila will next play Chinese Taipei's Hong Wei Ye and Nicole Gonzales Chan.

Elsewhere, there was disappointment as three other Indian mixed doubles pairs lost their opening matches.

The pair of Satish Kumar Karunakaran and Aadya Variyath was sent packing by third seeded Malaysian duo of Soon Huat Goh and Shevon Jamie Lai 18-21 19-21.

Later, Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh also lost 9-21, 11-21 to the Malaysian pair of Thulith Palliyaguru and Panchali Adhikari.

The other Indian mixed doubles pair of Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde fought hard for 56 minutes before going down 21-18 17-21 17-21 against another Malaysian combination of Roy King Yap and Valeree Siow. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

ARJUN ERIGAISI STUNS MAGNUS CARLSEN ON DAY 1

NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL

Arjun Erigaisi made a strong start at the Freestyle Grand Slam Tour Stage 2 in Paris on Monday, defeating world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen in the opening round. The 21-year-old handed Carlsen his only loss of the day, but the Norwegian bounced back to win his next four games, finishing at the top of the points table with 5/6.

Arjun, who also defeated Fabiano Caruana, ended the day with 3.5/6, emerging as the highest-placed Indian player. He is currently ahead of compatriot R. Praggnanandhaa, who secured two wins against Ian Nepomniachtchi and Vidit Gujrathi to finish with 2.5/6.

Meanwhile, World Champion D. Gukesh had a challenging start, scoring 1.5/6. His only victory came against Arjun, marking his first full point in a Freestyle chess game this year after going winless in the first leg at Weissenhaus in February. —*PTI*

DeRozan combine for 80 points in Kings win over Pistons

NEW YORK, 8 APRIL

Zach LaVine scored 43 points, including 17 in the fourth quarter, and DeMar DeRozan added 37 as the Sacramento Kings rallied for a 127-117 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Monday to strengthen their bid for a first-round home game in the play-in tournament.

Domantas Sabonis had 19 points, 15 rebounds, and 10 assists for the Kings, which have won three straight and have a one-game lead over Dallas for ninth in the Western Conference.

Cade Cunningham scored 35 points and Tim Hardaway Jr. added 19 for Detroit, which has lost four of its last five games.

The Pistons started the second quarter with a 29-10 run to take a 66-48 lead. DeRozan scored eight of the Kings' next 14 points to close the deficit to 72-62 at halftime. Sacramento took its first lead of the second half, 97-94, when LaVine made a 3-pointer with less than a second left in the third quarter.

The Kings never relinquished the lead, and the closest Detroit could get was 106-105 on Cunningham's three-point play with 9:16 left in the game. Duncan Robinson scored 12 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter, Tyler Herro scored 20, and Miami pulled away to beat Philadelphia.Kel'el Ware had 19 points and 17 rebounds for the Heat, and Davion Mitchell had 12 points and nine assists. Quentin Grimes and Lonnie Walker IV each scored 29 for Philadelphia, which lost its 12th straight. Adem Bona scored 16 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for the 76ers. —*PTI*

Aston Villa's Marcus targets PSG hat-trick

LONDON, 8 APRIL

Marcus Rashford returns to Paris Saint-Germain with Aston Villa on Wednesday, seeking a hat-trick of wins at the home of the French champion, while Marco Asensio can hurt his parent club. The two players have impressed since signing on loan for Unai Emery's men in the winter transfer window, scoring a combined 11 goals in all competitions. Villa head to Paris in a buoyant mood on the back of seven straight wins in all competitions -- they are sixth in the Premier League and face Crystal Palace in the FA Cup semi-finals later this month.

PHOTO: X

Rashford will have a spring in his step after twice playing a pivotal role in securing victories for boyhood club Manchester United at PSG's Parc des Princes stadium.

In 2019, in a Champions League last-16 second-leg meeting, he scored a stoppage-time penalty, ensuring United progressed on away goals. —*PTI*

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUALIFICATION HOPES

Leicester hit new low with 3-0 defeat to Newcastle

LONDON, 8 APRIL

Newcastle United's Jacob Murphy scored twice in the opening 11 minutes as his side beat a dismal Leicester City 3-0 away to move fifth in the Premier League on Monday.

Eddie Howe's side was ruthless in boosting its Champions League qualification hopes, while 19th-placed Leicester became the first side in English Football League history to suffer eight successive home league defeats without scoring.

Leicester set another unwanted club record as it suffered an 11th home league loss of a miserable campaign. Murphy was left unmarked to slot in the opening goal from Tino Livramento's low cross in the second minute, and he had another easy finish to make it 2-0 after Fabian Schar's audacious long-range effort from inside his half bounced down off the crossbar.

Goalscorer Jacob Murphy celebrates with Harvey Barnes PHOTO: @NUFC

Former Leicester player Harvey Barnes increased the misery for the hosts before halftime with a close-range finish.

Ruud van Nistelrooy's team showed more resilience after the break, but Newcastle cruised to a victory that put it above champion Manchester City on 53 points from 30 games, level with fourth-placed Chelsea and with a match in hand.

"We know we are in a good position in the table. All we can do is our job and win our games, and we will finish in the top four or five," Barnes told Sky Sports. "If we win the games, the teams will be chasing us and not us chasing them." —*PTI*